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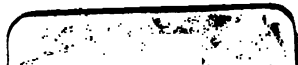
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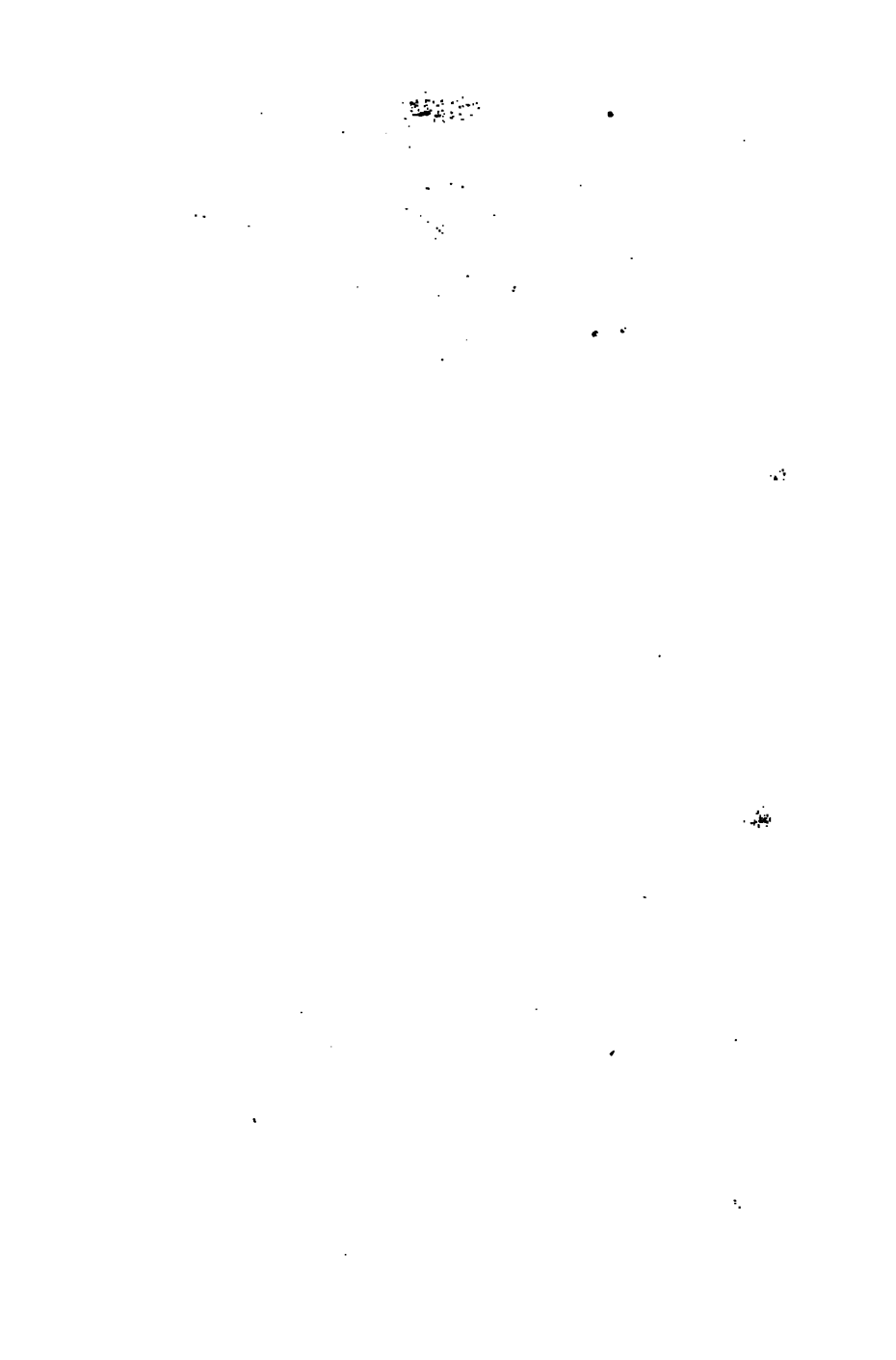
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Disce Vivere:

LEARN TO LIVE.

BY

CHRISTOPHER SUTTON, D.D.

REPRINTED FROM THE FIRST EDITION, OF 1602:

WITH A

MEMOIR OF HIS LIFE.



L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR THE

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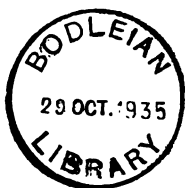
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MEMOIR
OF
CHRISTOPHER SUTTON, D.D.

THE learned, eloquent, and pious Author of the following treatise, CHRISTOPHER SUTTON, is said to have been a "Hampshire man born." Of his parentage and his earliest years, no information seems to have been preserved to our day, except that the register of his matriculation in the University of Oxford records his lowly origin.¹ The date of his birth must be fixed somewhere about the eighth year of Queen Elizabeth, 1565; he having entered a "batteler or commoner of Hart Hall, in 1582, at the age of seventeen." The time of his matriculation, and of his residence in the University, naturally suggests many points of inquiry, both as to his instructors and his companions. But such inquiries, it is presumed, could now end only in conjecture. Still we must not overlook the fact, that Sutton had begun his academical life before Richard

¹ "Aul. Cerv. Martii 1, 1582. Christopherus Sutton, Hamptonensis, plebei filius. An. 17." Reg. Matr. P. This date would correspond with March 1, 1583, according to our present mode of reckoning.

Hooker¹ "was drawn from the tranquillity of his college ; from that garden of piety, of pleasure, of peace, and a sweet conversation, into the thorny wilderness of a busy world." Undoubtedly it cannot be fairly thence inferred that the young scholar had then an opportunity of profiting by Hooker's preaching, and conversation, and example ; though one might be unwilling to conclude that any individual was altogether shut out from the benefits which Hooker's residence in Oxford diffused among his contemporaries. But when we find these two men so closely coinciding in their sentiments on spiritual and ecclesiastical subjects, we may at least suppose that Sutton was not unknown in after days to Hooker ; whilst doubtless that master in our Israel had been, by his works at least, a guide and instructor to this younger brother in divine things ; as he was indeed, and still is, to the Church at large.

Christopher Sutton very shortly changed Hart Hall for Lincoln College, as a member of which he proceeded to his degrees in arts and divinity, having become B.A. Oct. 12, 1586 ; M.A. June 18, 1589 ; B.D. May 25, 1598 ; and D.D. June 30, 1608.

How long he remained in Oxford preparing himself for the better discharge of his sacred duties as a minister of the Church, we

¹ Isaac Walton's *Life of Hooker*.

are not told : but the opinion that he was prematurely ordained, and was presented to a pastoral charge as incumbent, before the legal age, seems to have originated altogether in mistake.² The first preferment to which he is

² Anthony a Wood, in his biographical notices of Sutton (unless it be an error of the press), has unquestionably antedated his presentation to Rainham by ten years. Subsequent writers have followed that author with too implicit a reliance on his accuracy. Hence appears to have arisen the error of considering Sutton to have been both "ordained and presented to Rainham before he was twenty-three;" and of supposing him "to have held the rectory of Woodrising," subsequently to his resignation of Rainham, and his enjoyment of Caston. Had the facts been so, a question would naturally have suggested itself as to the state of church-discipline in the times of Queen Elizabeth; for certainly the admission of a clerk to a benefice before he was twenty-three years of age, had been prohibited by statute some years before, 13 Eliz. c. 12. 1571. But, besides that the mistake involves such an inconsistency in this case, we are here strongly reminded that no one can be too cautious in trusting implicitly to any author, especially in deducing inferences from assumed dates, without first verifying the facts on the best evidence. Often does an apparently slight and unimportant error lead imperceptibly to a totally perverted view of things, unconnected with the immediate subject of inquiry.

The statute of Elizabeth enacts that "No person shall hereafter be admitted to any benefice, with cure, except he be then of the age of twenty-three: and that none shall be made minister, or admitted to preach and administer the sacrament, under the age of twenty-four years." The ambiguity of the word "minister," in this statute, has been often the subject of remark.

known to have been advanced was the¹ rectory of Woodrising, in Norfolk, in the year 1591, when he was twenty-six years of age. His early and steady friends and patrons were the members of the ancient family of Southwell, especially that Sir Robert Southwell, of whose calm and happy death he speaks so feelingly in the Preface of his *Disce Mori*. Robert was the son of Sir Thomas Southwell, by Mary, daughter of Sir Rice Mansell, of Glamorganshire; and, as Rear-admiral, was present at the famous engagement with the Spanish fleet, in 1588. He married the Lady Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Lord Howard of Effingham, afterwards Earl of Nottingham, and Lord High Admiral of England. Sir Robert died Oct. 12, 1599, leaving his widow with three daughters and an infant son, Thomas, then about five months old. She subsequently married the Earl of Carrick.

To this "honourable and virtuous, his very good lady, who, as he was fully persuaded, truly revered God and served him, whom

¹ Parkin says, that in 1603, Christopher Sutton made a return, that in Woodrising there were then forty communicants. This seems to be too large a proportion, unless the circumstances of the place have very much changed. At the last census the whole population of Woodrising did not exceed 127.—*Parkin's Norfolk*, vol. x. pp. 277. 280.

to serve is blessed liberty, yea is the most honourable estate of all," Sutton dedicated his treatise, *Disce Mori*, at its earliest publication in 1600, during the first year of her widowhood, and also his latter work, *Disce Vivere*. It does not appear to have been elsewhere noticed, that "the two virtuous and modest gentlewomen², the now Lady Verney and the Lady Rodney, sisters, sometime attending upon the late Queen in her honourable privy chamber," to whom Dr. Sutton subsequently dedicated his "*Godly Meditations on the most Holy Sacrament*," were the two youngest daughters of his patron and patroness, Sir Robert and Lady Elizabeth Southwell; Catherine, who married Sir Greenville Verney, of Warwickshire; and Frances, who married Sir Edward Rodney, of Somersetshire.

Nor must it be unnoticed, that the name of their eldest daughter, Elizabeth, does not appear in that dedication. The lamentable circumstances of her alliance with Sir

² In the edition of 1613 (in black letter) the Dedication is "To the two virtuous, modest gentlewomen, M^{rs} Katherine and M^{rs} Frances Southwell, sisters, attending upon the Queen's Majesty, in her honourable privy chamber." This Queen was Anne, wife of James the First, who died March 2, 1619. Hence, in the editions subsequent to her death, the ladies are said to have been "sometime attending upon the late Queen."

Robert Dudley¹, forbade so rightminded Christian as Sutton to include her, though the most splendidly connected of them all in the same dedication with her two "right virtuous and modest sisters." It was pain and grief to him, when he witnessed so unhappy a stain blighting one of the fairest branches of a family, towards which he was ever forward to profess his gratitude and affection; and when earnestly calling upon his fellow Christians to "prepare them-

¹ This Sir Robert Dudley was the son of the celebrated Earl of Leicester, the favourite of Queen Elizabeth, by Lady Douglas Howard. He had married Alice, daughter of Sir Thomas Leigh, of Stoneleigh, by whom he had five children. Failing to establish his legitimacy, he could not succeed to the estates and honours of his father, and leaving his native country in disgust, he settled in the Grand Duke of Tuscany's dominions. His learning and endowments procured him the patronage of the Emperor Ferdinand, who created him duke of the empire. Before he left England he had separated himself from his wife Alice, alleging, on a disgraceful pretence, that his marriage with her was originally void. When he went abroad he took with him Elizabeth Southwell, whom he afterwards married, having obtained a dispensation from the Pope. She is represented to have been a very beautiful and accomplished person. Alice Leigh, who survived him, was always acknowledged in England to be his lawful wife; and Charles the Second created her Duchess Dudley in her own right. Her residence, which adjoined the Church-yard of St. Giles in the Fields, she gave to the Rector of that parish for ever.

selves dutifully to receive their Saviour in the state of grace, that they might be received by Him into the state of glory," he would make mention only of those who persevered in adorning the doctrine of the Gospel in all things. Elizabeth Southwell had become a duchess of the Empire, but she had forgotten her religious duties and devotion to God, "without which," in Sutton's own words, "all the dignity of the world is worth nothing."

The Dedication itself reflects honour upon our author's integrity and gratitude, bears his testimony to the worth of a family who were high in favour with Queen Elizabeth, and abounds with pious sentiments. Its first sentences will not be thought out of place here. — "That desire you have, Right virtuous, to serve God in holiness of life, and very towardsly disposition even from your tender years, so applicable to all goodness (wherein may you wax old by the grace of God), have often moved me to beseech Him who hath begun this good work in you, to continue the same even to an aged and happy end. For surely our religious duties and respective devotion to God is worth all the world's dignity besides ; nay, without this, all the dignity of the world is nothing worth."

In 1597, June 6, his patron, Sir Robert Southwell, presented Sutton to the vicarage of Rainham, in Essex, which however he

retained only one year, resigning it on his presentation (Aug. 14, 1598) to Caston, in Norfolk¹—the Caston which Anthony a Wood says was in Sutton's own country. This living² he held till the year 1618, when he was succeeded in it by John Sutton, probably Christopher's brother, mentioned in his will, and certainly the same person who was advanced by King James (during the minority of Thomas Southwell) to the rectory of Woodrising, which Sutton resigned in 1612, on his presentation to Much or Great Bromley, in Essex. This parish, called by Anthony a Wood Murley Bromley (as Newcourt³ presumes, from the Morleys, formerly lords of a moiety of this manor), Sutton held from the 27th November, 1612, till his death. His successor's institution is dated Aug 5, 1629, on "the death of Christopher Sutton."

The difficulty which many have felt with regard to the name of this parish, as found in Anthony a Wood, is now seen to have origi-

¹ Anthony a Wood's expressions, which are somewhat vague, have led to another curious mistake here. He says that Sutton was an Hampshire man born, and that he was presented to Caston in his own country; which in the recent edition of his *Meditations* is rendered "in his own county," and by Newcourt, "He became parson of Caston in Hampshire." There is no Caston in Hampshire.—*Newcourt*, vol. i. p. 927.

² Blomefield's *Norfolk*, vol. ii. p. 283.

³ Newcourt's *Dioc. Lond.* vol. ii. p. 97.

nated purely in a mistake. That antiquary refers to Dr. Sutton's will, from a copy of which, or from the report of it by others, he evidently drew much of his information respecting Sutton's preferment. In the authenticated office copy in Doctors' Commons, the reading is still unquestionably Morley Bromley ; but a careful collation of that copy with the original, in the testator's own handwriting (preserved there in fair condition), proves the word written by Sutton to have been Much Bromley ; the transcriber having mistaken the final letters, which it must be confessed are not easy to be deciphered. The solution of the difficulty supplies us with another curious instance of the readiness with which men will transmit errors, and even countenance them by reasonings or conjecture, rather than be at any pains to ascertain the matter of fact. The same observation applies equally to the name of another of his livings, Rainham. In the office copy of his will it is spelt Roneham, and so it is still found in Anthony a Wood, and from him has been copied into a late edition of his *Disce Mori* : in the original it is Rhaynham.

The living of Cranworth cum Letton ⁴ he

⁴ Parkin (whose original edition contains the mistake, which is too faithfully adhered to afterwards, though after all it probably arose merely by an error of the press in transposing the two final figures,) states that Christopher Sutton was presented to Cranworth by Thomas Southwell in 1632, three years after Sutton's death.

enjoyed not quite six years, having been instituted to it, as appears by the Norwich register, August 4, 1623.

Shortly after the accession of King James, that monarch having been exceedingly delighted by Sutton's "excellent and florid preaching," presented him to a stall in Westminster Abbey.¹ This prebend he retained to the day of his death.

Although Sutton was in his lifetime so celebrated a preacher, yet no specimen of his pulpit eloquence seems to have survived him.² Indeed, the only sermon of which we find any specific mention made, is the discourse which he delivered at the funeral of the famous antiquary, Camden. And the expression employed, with reference to this sermon, would lead us perhaps to infer, that he did not, on that occasion, deliver an elaborately written composition, but rather that it was unprepared, and spoken on the spur of the occasion: "He stept up into the pulpit, and made a true, grave, and modest commemoration of his life."

This expression is found in Anthony a Wood's own report of Dr. Sutton's sermon;

¹ This prebend had been held in commendam by Dr. Young, Bishop of Rochester; Sutton was installed in 1604.

² The Author of the posthumous volume of Sermons by Dr. Sutton, published in 1633, was not Christopher, but Thomas Sutton, of St. Mary-Overie.

and the entire passage is in itself interesting. "At length our author, Camden, paying his last debt to nature, at his house at Chiselhurst, in Kent, on Sunday, the 9th of November, 1623, his body afterwards was conveyed to Westminster, to the house there, where he used to dwell; where lying in state for some time, it was, on the 19th day of the same month, carried to St. Peter's, commonly called the Abbey Church, within that city, accompanied by several of the heralds in their formalities, many of the nobility, clergy, gentry, and others; all which being placed, Dr. Christopher Sutton, a prebendary of that Church, stepped up into the pulpit, and made a true, grave, and modest commemoration of his life; adding, that as he (Camden) was not factious in his religion, so neither was he wavering or inconstant; of which he gave good testimonies at his end, professing in the exordium of his last will that he died as he had lived, in the faith, communion, and fellowship of the Church of England."³

Scanty as these materials confessedly are, it is believed that no additional particulars relating to Dr. Sutton can now be recovered. Indeed, for the purposes of this Memoir, the records, as well of Lincoln College as of Westminster Abbey, were searched in vain.

³ Wood, Athen. Oxon. Bliss. vol. ii. p. 348.

No information has been obtained which can either directly or by inference, add to our knowledge of the circumstances of his life, his habits, his labours in the ministry, or his death.

His last will indeed leaves us in no doubt that when he died he left neither child nor widow behind him ; or rather it enables us, without much chance of error, to infer that he never was married. He wrote that will on Good Friday, April 3, 1629 : and although he there states himself to have been then in good health, he probably survived the execution of the document only a very short time. Little more than three months elapsed before his will was proved in the Prerogative Court at Canterbury.

This original document (which has been recently examined, and which does not appear to have been hitherto made accessible to the admirers of his writings,) contains so explicit a declaration of his faith in the fundamental articles of Gospel truth, so breathes throughout the spirit of a modest, pious, and charitable mind, and affords so good a practical illustration of his own principles and advice¹ which he had published thirty years before, that it has been deemed desirable to insert it in this place entire.

¹ See *Disce Mori*, chapters xii. and xiii.

“ IN the year one thousand six hundred twentie nine, on the third day of April, being Good Friday. The last Will and Testament of me Christopher Sutton, Prebend of [the] Cathedral and Collegiate Church of St. Peter in Westminster, written with mine own hand, in manner and form following.

“ In the name of God, Amen. I Christopher Sutton, Doctor in Divinity, and Prebend of the Cathedral and Collegiate Church of Westminster, most unworthy of that title and place, being at this present (I give Almighty God praise) of good health and memory, do make and ordain my last Will and Testament, in form and manner following: Imprimis, I commend in humble manner my both body and soul into the hands of [the] blessed Trinity: my poor sinful soul I commend into the hands of God the Father, who hath created it, into the hands of God the [Son] my merciful Redeemer, who hath redeemed it, into the hands of God the Holy Ghost [who hath] sanctified it, and after an unspeakable manner infused His graces into it, in prospering [me] in my study and calling, in preserving me, his unworthy servant, from innumerable evils whereinto, by the corruption of mine nature, I had often fallen. And for my earthly body, I bequeath [it] to Christian burial in the place where it shall

please God to call me out of this mortal life. If it be at Westminster, I humbly crave to be buried before the vestry door, where the choirmen keep their surplices, to whom I give the sum of five pounds. If it please God to call me in the country, I desire to be buried with divine service. If it happen there be a sermon, I request the preacher to speak little of praise, to whom I give twenty shillings. Item, I give to the parish of Raynham, in Essex, where I was sometimes vicar, the sum of six pounds, towards the building of a vicarage-house there. Item, I give the parish of Caston, where I was sometimes parson, a small tenement, for some poor body to dwell in, whom the parson and churchwardens shall think have most need. Item, I give unto the poor of Wood Rising, where I was sometimes parson, fifty shillings. Item, I give to the poor of Much Bromley, in Essex, where I am now parson, fifty shillings. Item, I give unto the poor of Cranworth, where I am now parson, fifty shillings. All which legacies I will to be paid within one year after my decease. Item, my will is, that all my books, wheresoever, be kept in store for my brother John Sutton his children, if please God any of them prove scholars ; they to have them amongst [them]. Item, I give to John Sutton his eldest son, after his father's decease, the land I have in mortgage from

Reynold Maroin, of Much Bentley in Essex. Item, I give to Elizabeth Sutton, my brother's daughter, a small tenement in Much Bromley in Essex. To Thomas Sutton the tenement taken up in his name in Little Bentley; both these tenements, after their father's decease. Item, I give unto Christopher Sutton and Peter Sutton twenty pounds apiece, to be paid at the age of one and twenty years. Item, I give unto my sister Stempe one gold ring, and one other to my sister Poalwheele. Item, I give unto William Garname, my late servant, twenty pounds. Item, I give to Frances Woodson, my now servant, ten pounds. Item, I give amongst my good friend Mr. Ireland's children the sum of ten pounds. The rest of my lands, goods, cattle [chattels], whatsoever, I give to my brother John Sutton, whom I make sole executor of this my last will and testament, binding [him] to pay all my debts, and see these legacies performed, within one year after my decease. Last of all, I make Mr. Ireland, of Westminster, and William Sarvham, servant to his Majesty, overseers of this my last will and testament, made the year and day above written, per me

“CHRISTOPHER SUTTON.”

The above will was proved, and adminis-
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tration given to his brother John Sutton, 2 July, 1629.

When Christopher Sutton was born, horrors of Queen Mary's persecutions were fresh in the memory of many of his still surviving contemporaries, and he lived to the fifth year of Charles the First, when the horizon had already been blackened with many signs of the storm which was then soon to gather and close in on every side; and which was destined under the correcting hand of providence, to sweep away for a season our most sacred institutions, temporal and spiritual, in one desolating flood. But though he may thus appear to have lived in a sort of breathing-time between the two conflicts, by which popery and fanaticism, each in its turn, persecuted the faithful members of our Church; and thus to have been spared those fiery trials, on the one hand, to which his predecessors had been exposed; and to have escaped, on the other, the struggle which his immediate successors were called to endure in their devoted attachment to our apostolic communion; yet the years of his ministry required, and gave ample room for, the full exercise of zeal and decision, of firmness and charity combined.

The perplexities and distracted state of the Church, upon which our Author, in the "Preface to the Godly Reader," prefixed to his "*DISCE MORI*," very powerfully and fe-

ingly touches, called for all the energies of her wisest and most faithful sons, both lay and clerical, to prevent for a time, under God's blessing, those awful calamities which not long after poured down upon her in all their fury. The biographer of Richard Hooker supplies an awful, but a most true comment, on those passages in Sutton's preface, which speak of "troublesome dispositions," "turbulent humours and private fancies," "plausible pretences of reformation," "cursed scoffing, sour austerities," "tossing the testimonies of ancient record to and fro, wresting the very text of holy writ," "men who take occasion to bring into obloquy our Christian cause," "no blessing of God acknowledged," "men bearing the name of Christians living like Pagans and infidels, and saying in their hearts, 'There is no God.'"

Isaac Walton, in describing those "oppositions, and anxieties, and troubles, that deprived Richard Hooker of the virtuous quietness which he desired, and the blessed tranquillity for which he prayed and laboured," draws a very interesting, though a very painful picture, of the state of those times. "The active Romanists on the one side, and the Nonconformists on the other," he represents as having become "fearless and restless in the prosecution of their designs and dangerous plots against the Church and State.

Many there were in this number possessed of a high degree of spiritual wickedness, an innate restlessness, pride, and malice, a complacency in working and beholding confusion,—men, whom a furious zeal and prejudice had blinded, and made incapable of hearing reason, or adhering to the ways of peace—men, whom pride and self-conceit had made to overvalue their own wisdom, and become pertinacious, disputing against those men whom they ought to have revered, and those laws which they ought to have obeyed. To heighten all these discontents and dangers, there was also sprung up a generation of godless men—men that had so often and so proudly opposed the blessed motions of the Blessed Spirit, and the inward lights of their own consciences, that they had thereby sinned themselves into a belief of what they would be glad to believe, but were not able to believe, that there is no God ; and so finding in themselves nothing but what was worse than nothing, they began to wish what they were not able to hope for—that they should be like the beasts that perish,—and in a wicked company, which is the Atheist's sanctuary were so bold as to say so."

It was in the midst of this "extremity fear and danger" that Christopher Sutt lived : and it was to call his countrymen far as in him lay) from these miser-

perversions of their nature, and to raise their minds to high and heavenly things, that he preached and wrote. Were we to draw any inference as to the circumstances of the original publication of his works, from the great difficulty now found in procuring early copies of them, we should conclude that they could have passed only through one or two editions, and those of very limited impressions. On the contrary, we learn from Anthony a Wood, that both his treatises *Disce Vivere*, and *Disce Mori*, were returned to the press several times, and that of his "Godly Meditations on the most Holy Sacrament," the thirteenth edition was published in 1677.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the seasonableness of the re-publication of such works as Sutton's admirable treatises, *Disce Mori* and *Disce Vivere*, at the present time; since it must be obvious to every one who merely glances at the state of things now surrounding us. Indeed, it would perhaps be difficult to mark out a single period from the days of the author, when the signs of the times would seem to render the spreading abroad of his pious and wise sentiments more opportune than now. Vast changes, doubtless, have been wrought, as well among the other nations of the world as in our own native land, since Christopher Sutton (with other men of pious and prudent minds and

of unshaken constancy) was raised up to do good in that time of need in which they lived. But the Church is still the same, and is still surrounded by dangers. Infidelity abounds, and threatens to make a still more open and wide demonstration of its malignity; the love of many who should be zealous in the cause of true religion, has waxed cold, whilst others have been carried away into all the extravagances of wild fanaticism. Human nature is the same in ourselves as it was in those who have gone before us, and we need the same calls to think seriously and soberly of Life and Death—to learn both to live, and to die. It is in the hope that these labours of a faithful son of the Church, himself an honoured man in his generation, may, under God's blessing, tend to cherish amongst us genuine feelings of piety, sound views of the Christian's duty in life, and the Christian's hope in death, together with a right apprehension generally of divine truth, that after a lapse of nearly two centuries and a half from their first appearance in the world, they are now re-published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

J. ENDELL TYLE

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,
March 30, 1839.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS volume contains a reprint of Dr. Sutton's work, entitled "DISCE VIVERE," as he originally published it in the year 1602. Copies of that impression are extremely scarce; and for the purpose of the present publication, the copy preserved in the Bodleian Library has been carefully transcribed. It is remarkable, that no Dedication whatever is found in this edition; though the work appears to have been subsequently dedicated to Lady Elizabeth Southwell, the same person to whom the author had inscribed his "Disce Mori," in 1600. Those later editions, on the other hand, omit the Dialogue at the close of "Disce Vivere," as well as the Dialogues, and the "Short Discourse on a peaceable Course of

Life," appended to "Disce Mori," all which it has been now considered proper to restore in the re-publication of the original works. The alterations which present themselves throughout the later editions of "Disce Vivere," whether of addition, suppression, or substitution, compared with the form in which the work first appeared, are at least equally numerous with those to which reference has been already made in the edition of "Disce Mori," lately put forth by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

June 10, 1839.

Disce Vivere.

Learn to Live.

A briefe forme of Learning to Liue, wherein is shewed, that the life of *Christ* is the most perfect patterne of direction to the life of a *Christian*.

In which also, the well disposed may behold their orderly passage from the state of Grace to the state of glorie.

EPHE. 5. 14.

Awake thou that sleepest, and stand vp from the dead, and Christ shal giue thee light.

LONDON:

Printed by *J. Windet*, for Cuthbert Burby,

and are to be sold at his shop at the Exchange.

1602.

LONDON :

—

**PRINTED BY WILLIAM WATTS,
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THE
PREFACE
TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

IF to live, were no other but to draw in, and to breathe out the soft air (as the wise man speaketh), a needless labour were it, Good Christian Reader, to lay down any instructions unto the world of **LEARNING TO LIVE** ; for this is done naturally both of men and beasts, without any teaching, or learning at all.

If to live were no other but to cast about for the favour and riches of the world (as some men are wont to call it, the way to live), then would it soon follow, the greater Machiavellians the better liver. Somewhat more there is required to live Christianly than so ; somewhat more, I say (and that all shall one day find), than either drawing in and breathing out the soft air, or the plotting to compass the pleasures and profits of the world. It was Balaam's wish, " Let my soul die the death

of the righteous¹," it should have first been his practice to live the life of the righteous. The time we spend, as we do for the most part, consuming our days in vanity, and our years in folly (to say a plain truth as in the sight of God), is rather a death than life: for life is not that which is measured by the number of years: it is the religious, honest, sober, and harmless conversation that draweth to an honourable age amongst men here, and to eternal happiness with God hereafter.

Now the general decay of this Christian course is the general course of these sinful days, wherein so many have just cause to cry out, This is a wicked world, a wretched world, an ungodly world; such as our forefathers before us never saw. With the buyer, every one can say, "It is naught, it is naught:" but for all this (saith St. Austin), "a profession it is, but no amendment is seen."² Religion is become nothing less than religion, a matter of mere talk: such politizing is there on all parts, as a man cannot tell who is who; so little sincerity we have in regard of our souls, as if we had no souls at all.

When Plato saw the Argentines live so unreformedly as they did, Surely these men,

¹ Numb. xxiii. 10.

² Professio est, non emendatio.—*Aug. de Temp. Na. Serm.* 30.

quoth he, live as if they should never die. Whatsoever men for fashion's sake may give out in words, it is to be feared there is in some no firm belief of another world settled in their hearts. Eli said, "This is not well." Young men without obedience, old men without devotion, Christians without charity; it would make one's heart to mourn, to consider seriously the calamity of our time, when there needs no more, but as Philip said unto Nathaniel, "Come and see."³

Without all peradventure, Christianity is much out of frame, if we consider things aright: we are generally Christians in name, but in action nothing less: far from the old Christianity of the world; howsoever we are ready to controul all that ever lived, and will not stick to censure the blessed Saints of heaven. Our boldness is great, and I pray God our security do not mar all in the end. Cornelius, Cornelius, thy almsgiving and thy prayers in this sense also are ascended up into heaven; for where are they to be found amongst us here in earth?⁴ In times past Christians vowed themselves to all holiness of life, they served God in hunger and thirst, in watching and praying night and day; they cared not to be poor unto the world, so they might be rich unto God; to be pilgrims, or

³ John i. 46.

⁴ Acts x. 4.

as banished men upon earth, so they might be citizens in heaven. These holy friends of Christ, as confessors, martyrs, virgins, devout Christians of all sorts, men fearing God, and eschewing evil; these gave evident testimony to the world whose servants they were. It was once the complaining wish of Cæsar, "O that we had such soldiers as were in the time of Alexander the Great!"

Live we do : is it to God ? I would to God it were. We pass on for awhile, after a fashion such as it is ; but is all this to live Christianly ? No, verily : so a private estate in this world be provided for, let all sink or swim for the world to come. We respect ourselves only, neglecting all others. Christ pleased not himself, saith the apostle : with us it is otherwise, and yet we think ourselves perfect Christians. In that great knowledge we have (for we sin not so much of ignorance, as of negligence), we know but little as we ought. What availeth it to have Pharaoh's glory, and Pharaoh's ignominy ? Ahab's vineyard, and Ahab's destruction ? The rich man's life, and the rich man's death ? What blindness is it in seeking riches or honour ? Wilt thou perish, saith St. Austin, for that which perisheth ? Thus we go on, and that which is worse, we cannot tell when we shall make an end. Thus we live, and thus we die.

What other remedy in this state of things

(the disease being so general, as it is, and the gangrene spread almost into every part), than with the Ruler in the Gospel, who, when there was no way but one in the sight of man, with his sick son he comes unto Christ, with his "Lord, come down, or ever that my son die¹:" or to renew that petition of the prophet David, "It is time, Lord, that thou have mercy upon Sion ; yea the time is come."² All that men can do in this case is to observe the manner of loving friends, who in visiting the sick party, every one brings somewhat, by the grace of God, to further his health ; for while God doth afford space of repentance we may not despair of any one's conversion in particular ; and so long as loving, he vouchsafeth us the light of his truth and Gospel, we should not cast off all hope concerning the amendment of all in general : and, therefore, to advise men for the best, it is their care to whom God hath commended in his own stead a fatherly care of souls. Those of their religious orders beyond the seas, (to do them no wrong, but to give them their right,) bend their studies many of them, to treat of devotion ; and their treatises of this quality some of them are learned and laudable : while busy heads are about "mint and cummin³," while factious

¹ John iv. 47. 49.² Ps. cii. 13.³ Matt. xxiii. 23.

statists¹ are working mischief, men better advised, according to their vocation, respect "weightier matters of the law;" which we all should respect, remembering there is necessity laid upon us to live well: we run for a wager, we fight for a garland.

In seeking to repair devotion and piety, which this world hath well near lost, we will be as ready as themselves; and in honouring our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath honoured us all, we will go with them hand in hand. We hope one day to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, howsoever uncharitable, unpriestly, and unchristian censurers in many spiteful pamphlets give out against us. 'Tis true, the sinfulness of this age is great; with sighing hearts we wish it were otherwise, and with the Publican say, "Now God be merciful unto us, for we are sinners." But Sirs, are we alone in this defect of godliness? Your own writers will tell you, no; haply, your own experience can tell you, no; seeing iniquity like the darkness of Egypt, hath spread itself over the earth. Would to God this bitterness were left on both sides! When Michael fought against the dragon, Michael and his angels fought, they fought not angels against angels: should we fight Christians against Christians? Moses would not have

¹ [Satists, Ed. 1602.]

an Hebrew smite an Hebrew. There is a common adversary of us all, who lieth in wait like a subtle spy, whose desire is to make discord and trouble in earth, because he can trouble heaven no more.

Well! let busy meddlers content themselves, and serve God humbly in their calling; let them cease to trouble the peace of this Church and Common-wealth (which Jesus Christ long continue!) remembering that of Gamaliel, "If this counsel be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, you cannot destroy it." Sufficient to salvation, and that which every well-disposed man may use to his soul's health, is truly taught by the grace of God; notwithstanding, some turn the grace of God to liberty [licentiousness]; the best means to restrain this liberty [licentiousness] are daily wished; and some good success would ensue, if every one would apply himself to the exercise of Christian piety in his own practice.

Were we no other but plain natural men, God giving us reason and understanding, we are hence moved to pass our time orderly, whilst we are here. It is our common saying, "Better unborn, than untaught:" but being Christian men, merciful Lord, that we should not remember the happy hope we all have, or ought to have.

In the articles of our creed, we mention an *everlasting life after death*, and acknowledge

a judgment to come : O good God, that we should live, as if hell fire were no other but a poetical fiction. Assuredly we do our calling open injury, acknowledging the holy Catholic Christian faith, when our profession promiseth one thing, and our practice performeth another.

Is it not wonderful, that we should even forget whose creatures we are ? Yet this we do. All know their beginning was from God, and that after a while in God they must end. Now for to spend this space between the beginning and the end in undutiful sort toward him, were in very reason unreasonable.

The Apostle St. Paul speaketh of some men who indeed confess God, "but by their works," saith he, "they deny him¹:" so God is denied as by evil words so by evil works.

The old writers tell us of a kind of people called Onocentauri and Hippocentauri, which in one part have the form of men, in another of beasts : what other are they, who as men have a part rational, but as sensual men are indeed bestial ? Do they so much as bethink themselves that man is a creature capable of happiness ? If Adam were alive to name all things, as at the beginning, is it likely he would call them Christians, that is, a people dedicated and consecrated to the service of Jesus Christ ? Should we flatter ourselves,

¹ Tit. i. 16.

and so in the end deceive ourselves? Why, "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ²:" true, "There is none to them," saith he, "which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "Hath the blood of Christ cleansed us from all our sins? then from the sin of security?" saith St. Austin. It is not a bare historical faith that brings us by and by to heaven, howsoever we walk on in the vanity of our minds: St. Paul saith, "We have not so learned Christ³," as if our learning of Christ doth teach us another lesson than so.

When we see a vineyard well manured and ordered, we by and by say, It hath a good keeper: shall we not say the same of a life well ordered? It is a glory unto the vine when the branches are fruitful: it is a joy unto the father when the son is dutiful: we are the branches, Christ is the vine: we are his children, he is our Father, a Father which is above all, through all, and in us all.⁴ Being Christians, we are the Lord's heritage, and the Lord's heritage should be holy unto him. "Wherefore the name Christian," saith an ancient father, "is a name of justice, a name of goodness, a name of integrity, of patience, of humility, of innocency, of piety: and he rightly beareth this name who never beareth malice in his heart, who followeth Christ's

² Rom. viii. 1.

³ Eph. iv. 20.

⁴ Eph. iv. 6.

doctrine, and endeavoureth Christ's example, that blessed pattern for imitation."

The skilful painter having now proposed unto himself some excellent work, all his study and care is to express in as lively manner as he can the form laid out before him: the life of Christ our Saviour according to his humanity is laid out before us as a goodly table. Our best art and industry is required to work according to this form, and to labour seriously until Christ be formed in us; as the Apostle speaketh¹, that is, until some form or resemblance of Christ appear in us, who bear his name; for the feature of the father is often seen in the face and countenance of the child.

Rude work, God knows, make they, who never either regard the pattern set before them, or any way respect the well ordering of the pencil, and so draw such monstrous and ugly forms as themselves may be sorry to see. "Should I call him a Christian²," saith one, "in whom there is no act of Christianity, no conversation of justice; who oppresseth the miserable, who maketh many poor to make himself rich, whose mouth is polluted with untruths, and so forth?" Whom do proud men fashion or shadow out less than the Son of God, who humbled himself that we might

¹ Gal iv. 19.

² Aug. de vit. Christ.

be exalted? Whom do revenging stomachs less resemble than him, who meekly prayed for his enemies? Christ saith, "Have I been so long with you, and have you not known me?"³

To call ourselves a little to a consideration of that which is comely—"An instinct there is," saith the philosopher, "even born with us, which is wont to move all men naturally to desire to learn or attain knowledge⁴:" now what learning more behoveful than that which instructeth us so to live in this world, as we may live eternally in the world to come? "We often study many arts, sometimes only to know (saith St. Bernard), which is curiosity; sometimes to be known, which is vanity; the art of arts, to live well, is little thought upon, much less studied: we are born, yea, and we draw to our end too, (as the wise man speaketh) and show no token of virtue."

Sometimes by fits we praise devotion, but never settle ourselves to practise it: now and then we cast out a little commendation of godliness, but we leave when we come to the following of it: like dastardly soldiers that can rail upon their enemies, we speak against vices, but never take arms to encounter them: haply we can talk of a Christian course, but in short time we are such strangers to all we

³ John xiv. 9.

⁴ Arist. Metaphy. lib. i. cap. 1.

spake of, as all comes to nothing: as if we only dreamed of something to be done; now all vanisheth. In our best moods we seem to be willing to "Learn to Live Christianly." Marry! we complain we have none to teach us, or if we have, who are there, we say, in this world (so barren of piety) that by their example will come forth, and go before us? It cannot be denied that we are as much (if not more) moved by good examples, as we are by good instructions; but what say we to that teacher who hath both examples and instructions?

"Then look we unto the life of Christ," saith St. Chrysostom, "and we shall find it the philosophy of the simple, the nurse of young men, the meat of strong men, the buckler of weak men, the physic of sick men, the book full of divine instructions, fit for all men."¹

"Those who apply themselves (saith St. Austin) to any of the liberal arts or sciences, are wont to make choice of some especial author, whose precepts before other they observe and follow: what better author than the author of all righteousness? What better learning than that of which Christ is the teacher, his Church is the school, those which learn are Christians, that which is learned is

¹ Aug. de discip. Christ.

religion, and the end of this learning is to live eternally? Again, whereas examples are likened unto living laws, what example more lively than the life of Christ? It is said that the devout life of a certain holy man in Egypt in his time brought many others to observe the same holiness. If the example of a good man could avail so much, what should the example of the Son of God do? Wherefore no better form for direction to Christians in Learning to Live, than evermore to have before them the love of Christ. "He never errs (saith St. Jerome) who followeth the truth; him let us follow, who we all confess ought to be followed."²

Wherefore in the setting down some plain and brief manner of Learning to Live, methought there was no better method, than only to mention the most divine actions of our Redeemer, that not so much my small labours, as the life of Christ might lay down unto well-disposed Christians a form of Learning to Live. The more ample and exquisite dilating hereof I leave to greater clerks; myself am content for this time being required, where I might not deny, as before of Learning to Die, so now to treat somewhat

² Nunquam errat qui veritatem sequitur: illius exemplum imitemur, quem omnes fatemur imitandum.—*Hier. de be. mod. vive.*

of Learning to Live; and in both to submit my imperfections to better judgment, and my meaning to the honest minded, who are wont to take good meaning to the best. Take, therefore, Gentle reader, this treatise for our better Christian learning to live Christianly as we ought, taken out of the life of Christ, the best pattern for imitation that ever this world had.

To them who are passing through dark places, any light, be it never so little, may stand them in stead: To him who wandereth in unknown ways, any small direction is acceptable, be it never so small, so it point him towards the way wherein he should pass. The traveller in a foreign country, meeting with somebody that speaks his natural language, though it be but harshly, yet it is some comfort unto him:—we often pass in the darkness of our sensual desires, and are sometimes blinded in the midst of worldly vanities; we stray we know not whither; any small light, the least direction may in this case somewhat help us: “we are strangers in this world and from home¹,” (as the Apostle speaketh) to hear somewhat of our native language, that is to say, of heaven and heavenly things, though it be in the meanest manner, yet it may some-

¹ 2 Cor. v. 6.

what affect us, especially our affections being homeward.

Tobit had an angel to direct him in his journey forth and home ; when Tobit was returned to his father's house, the angel left him : we have in our journey to heaven more than an angel ; yea, the Lord of angels, Christ Jesus, by his example of life to go before us, and his grace within to strengthen us : if we follow him he will bring us safe and sound to his, and, by him, to our Father's house : Will he there leave us ? No, he will there tarry and rejoice with us, and we with him. If it be said, how should our weakness come near him to whom all things were possible by reason of his power ? the answer is, our good endeavours are acceptable. If we fancy unto ourselves a secure estate in that we are called Christians, it is showed we are far wide ; and how (if in devotion we would see our spiritual passage from the life of grace, to the life of glory, and observe that happy Christian course which tendeth unto a thrice happy end,) we are directed unto the virtues of Christ all along, from virtue to virtue. If we would know whereunto all his sayings and doings, his words and works did tend, it shall appear in the application that all were for our instruction : sometimes for the confirmation of our faith, and sometimes also for the direction of our life. If we will hear the

verity of the resurrection confirmed, which is the stay of us Christians, we are led to the resurrection of Christ. If of our ascending, we are moved to consider the efficacy of his. All these, as we confess with the mouth, and believe in the heart, so we must express in our lives, or our believing is no believing. It is said of Mary Magdalene, not that she professed much, but she loved Christ much : faith and hope are busy above in heaven ; charity is there too, and yet is diligently here beneath in earth.

Many Christians, I doubt not, there are in the world, who think within themselves, had they lived but near Christ their Saviour, when he was conversant here in earth, how willingly would they have left this world, with all the desires thereof, to have been his followers. What love, what service, with Mary, would they have done at his very feet, and with what affection ! Christ the treasure of our hearts is above in heaven, his followers are we in earth, while we observe his precepts, express his virtues, embrace his merits, extol his mercies : we do him service, and service of love, when we are down in devotion at the footstool of his mediation : we honour him who hath so much honoured us with so high a title (for of Christ are we called Christians) to have part with him, when our light doth so shine before men, as we glorify our

Father which is in heaven¹; which light showeth that our happiness is followed up in the bosom of hope

And this is briefly the sum (Good Christian Reader), of that which is mentioned more at large in the treatise following, of Learning to Live; which learning only teacheth to become good men by the grace of God. It now remaineth that we all apply ourselves to the practice thereof. Time will away. Hippocrates, exhorting some to the study of that learning which doth concern the health of the body, would have them make all possible expedition they could: His reason was, "Art is long, life is short."² The same may be said of that art which concerneth the health of the soul. Should we wax white before we begin? God forbid. Here we follow Christ in the state of grace, hereafter we shall reign with him in the state of glory.

In the mean while, plain dealing is best on all parts. "To a right faith," saith St. Austin, "let us join a right conversation³:" yea, and let us all join together who are Christians, to meditate devoutly of the life of Christ: for were the life of our Saviour more thought upon, we should soon have a better world than

¹ Matt. v. 16.

² Ars longa, vita brevis.

³ Rectæ fidei rectam conversationem.—*Aug. de Ver. Apost.*

we have, and men would more remember another world than ordinarily they do. "The birds of the air have nests, and the foxes have dens, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." What's that? saith St. Austin. Marry! ambitious and soaring desires, subtle and ungodly devices, have nests and dens in our hearts, but a remembrance of our Lord Jesus, which should take peaceable possession of our souls, can have no entrance at all, in which case we rather want tears, than cause of tears.

To conclude ; the special mean in helping to reform what is amiss this way, as hath been now said, is, that every well-disposed Christian, (who keeps a careful watch over his soul, and is desirous to live worthy of his calling here, until he come to live eternally,) begin with the best attention his best devotion can yield, to take a diligent survey of the life of Christ, whose soul-saving love is the loadstone of our hearts : whose sayings and doings are a law unto our lives, a lantern to light our steps, the guide to direct our journey, the compass to steer our ship, and last of all, the judge for to end our controversies. As the just live by faith, so the just live the life of faith. Now they live the life of grace, one day they shall live the life of glory.

It is Christ, and Christ alone, who hath made a full and joyful satisfaction for our sins.

The God of patience and consolation make us followers of God as dear children¹: and grant that we be like minded one towards another, after the example of Jesus Christ.² Amen.

If ought be worthy of thy observation (Good Christian reader), remember it is God's : if otherwise, it is mine own.

CHRISTOPHER SUTTON.

¹ Eph. v. 1.

² Rom. xv. 5.



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DISCE VIVERE.

Learn to Live.

CHAPTER I.

An exhortation moving every devout Christian often to meditate of the life of Christ.

“WHILST I was musing,” (saith the prophet) “the fire kindled¹ ;” what was this fire but the love of God ? what was this musing but the bellows to blow the sparks, and kindle the flame of David’s affection ? which affection bred desire, which desire caused love, which love clean carried away his heart, to the testimonies of God’s law, in that he said : “Lord, what love have I unto thy statutes, all the day long is my study in them.”² Whereby we see that among the exercises of a devout and religious life, there is none more profitable, none that is wont more to elevate or to lift up the mind to a higher degree of perfection,

¹ Ps. xxxix. 3.

² Ps. cxix. 97.

than meditation. In meditation, what doth more move man to love God, than the revolving of his benefits? Among these benefits, was there ever any comparable to that, "So God loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have life everlasting?"¹ So then to meditate of the life of Him by whom we have eternal life, is the very life of life. What is there found that can more arm us against the vanities and allurements of the world, like as against the tribulations and adversities of the same, than continually to have before the eyes of our mind the memory of His doings and sayings, of His suffering and satisfaction made for the redemption of our souls?

2. In which Christian meditation so many unlooked for motives to love God do occur, when the devout soul doth recount the joy and inexplicable happiness whereunto all doth tend, as they may seem not only infallible testimonies of grace present, but after a sort, gladsome presages to the believing heart, even of future glory that is to come. Abraham saw Christ when the covenant was but promised, and yet it rejoiced his heart²: we see him now the covenant is performed, and shall we not rejoice? Simeon was a happy man, who saw

¹ John iii. 16.

² John viii. 56.

him with the eyes of his body³, and the faithful are as happy who see him with the eyes of their soul. It was a joy to those eye-witnesses who once beheld him in the flesh; and no less joy is it unto faithful believers, who still behold him in the spirit.

3. Every man (saith Seneca) that listeth to apply himself to reading and meditation, may have private conference with Zeno⁴, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Theophrastus, and the authors of good arts; he shall find them all at leisure to commune with him. But a thousand times more truly may it be said of the devout soul, that she may daily commune and converse with Jesus Christ, the author of her happiness, in calling to mind his sweet love mixed with so many labours; the scars and marks of his suffering which she may behold; his divine precepts which she may observe; his loving comforts which she may receive in all distresses, how great whatsoever.

4. Is it not more acceptable to see God with the shepherds at Bethlehem⁵, when the angels brought him with a song from heaven, than with Moses keeping his sheep, when he was flaming in the fiery bush?⁶ To hear Him upon mount Tabor to preach blessedness after blessedness⁷, than upon mount Sinai, when for lightning and thundering it was

³ Luke ii. 30.

⁴ Seneca de brevitate vitæ.

⁵ Luke ii. 16.

⁶ Exod. iii. 2.

⁷ Matt. v. 1.

present death for the people to approach ?¹ Is not the case altered ? It was said as a testimony of the love of God, Did ever God come so near a nation ? when he spake to the ancient Israelites by Moses his servant : How much more then may it be said when he spake unto his people by Christ Jesus his Son, Did ever God come so near a people ? Did he ever show such love since the foundations of the world were laid ?

5. Wherefore what better mean of enjoying heaven before heaven, than to call to mind the incarnation of the Son of God, his nativity, his circumcision, his fasting, his praying, all his labours and travails, his curing the sick, cleansing the lepers, dispossessing the devils, raising the dead, his preaching, his teaching, his compassion towards all, and after all, his most innocent (yet sharp) suffering for the sins of all ? How should we often in soul go with the wise men to Bethlehem², being directed by the star of grace³, and there fall down and worship the little King ; there offer the gold of perfect charity, the frankincense of devotion, the myrrh of penitence ; and then return, not by cruel Herod, or troubled Jerusalem, but another way, a better way, unto our long and happy home ?

6. How should we seek him sorrowing with

¹ Exod. xix. 18.

² Matt. ii. 9.

³ Matt. ii. 11.

blessed Mary⁴, and never leave seeking until we find him? How should we accompany him with the Apostles, beholding him doing wonderful miracles? How should we with the women follow him unto the cross⁵, and there condole his most bitter yet blessed passion? How should we descend in meditation whither he descended? rise early with Mary Magdalene⁶, come to the sepulchre and see his resurrection? with the men of Galilee wonder at his ascension up into heaven, and with joyful admiration expect his coming again in the same form he ascended?⁷ Last of all, how should we with the disciples continue in prayer, tarry at Jerusalem⁸, [or the "Vision of Peace," semblably with the Church] waiting for the coming of the Holy Ghost from above?

7. The more we love Christ, the more we meditate of his love. Where our treasure is (that is, the thing we most affect) there are also the cogitations of our hearts. What greater treasure than in Christ, the very mine where lie millions of treasure? On whom should we rather bestow our hearts than upon him, or where our best labours than where the best reward of labours is had? Where in

⁴ Luke ii. 48.

⁵ Luke xxiii. 27.

⁶ Luke xxiv. 1.

⁷ Acts i. 10.

⁸ [The name Jerusalem is derived by some from two Hebrew words, signifying the Vision of Peace, and it is here used for the Christian Church.—Ed.]

the whole world shalt thou sooner find true humility, perfect charity, obedience, patience without example, prayer, with many co-adjoined and allied virtues, than in the life of him who was the Lord of virtues? Consider how humbly he behaved himself in the world, how fellowlike with his Apostles, how merciful was he to the poor who seemed his special family. He despised none although lepers, he flattered none though rich and never so glorious. Free was he from the distracting cares of the world, whose care was his Father's glory and man's good.¹ How patient was he in bearing reproaches, how gentle in answers, thereby to cure and salve the envy of his adversary; how composed was he in all his gestures, how readily did he minister unto all, according to that: "I am in the midst of you as he that ministereth unto you!" What should be said more of him who was the sole mirror of all the world?

8. To meditate of his most divine life we may take joy as the prophet David did in the law of God², or as he speaketh of the man that is blessed, who doth exercise himself therein both day and night³: ~~or~~ as the wise man speaketh, "Write this law upon the tables of thy heart⁴," or as Moses spake, "Rehearse it to thy children, talk of it when thou

¹ John xvii. 4.

² Ps. xix. 8.

³ Ps. i. 2.

⁴ Prov. iii. 3.

tarriest in thine house, and as thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up; and thou shalt bind it for a sign upon thy hand, and thou shalt write it upon the posts of thy house, and upon thy gates; and it shall be as a frontlet between thine eyes.”⁵

Should we cease to think of him, and be weary to meditate of his life, who was not weary to do and suffer so many things to restore us to everlasting life?

9. If one should give a man daily benefits, upon this condition, that he omit not daily to remember him—if nothing else, yet the very benefits ought to prevail in this case: the daily, nay the hourly, or rather the continual benefits we receive should still renew the memory of him in whom consisteth the beginning, continuance, and end of all our good; and therefore with the Prophet we may say: “Lord, seven times a day will we praise thee;” and of all the mercies of Jesus Christ, we may do by these mercies, as the blessed Virgin did by the divine testimonies which were given of him, “She hath kept or pondered them all in her heart.”⁶

“Thou hast, O Christian soul,” saith St. Austin, “in the life of Christ, a most heavenly medicine to cure all thy defects, What

⁵ Deut. vi. 7.

⁶ Luke ii. 19.

pride is there that his humility doth not abate? What anger, that his gentleness doth not lenify? What covetousness, that his poverty doth not salve? What heart is there so benumbed, that his love doth not inflame? In every way here we have what to behold, what to imitate, what to admire; here we have what to fly, what to follow.”¹

10. “With the holy thou shalt be holy, and with the perfect man,” saith David “thou shalt be perfect.” Walk with Christ, and walk in the way of righteousness, whose life is a daily lesson; and like the book spoken of in the Apocalypse², “Take this book and eat it up,” receive it from the angel, or the disposer of God’s mysteries, receive this book open, not as of former times closed and shut, receive it as from the sea and land, the sea of adversity, the land of prosperity, as having instructions for both.

11. A certain solitary man being asked how he passed his time, having no more books about him, answered: “This great book or frame of the world is unto me instead of many other, wherein I often muse and meditate, nay legibly read the power and providence of God.”

If he could thus much say of the book of nature, then what may be spoken of the book

¹ Aug. de Ver. Dom.

² Rev. x. 9.

of grace? whereof a holy matron had this testimony for her high praise, that she was said always to have carried it next her heart, whereby she approached unto Christ, and Christ unto her, not only calling to mind what Christ did in general for all, but in particular for herself. Where shall we see the misery of man more opened, the mercy of God made more manifest, his love and grace more enlarged, than in meditating of the life of Christ?

The loving captain would that the soldier should behold the wounds received in his behalf, thereby to take comfort and courage: the martyr calling to mind Christ crucified upon the cross, endureth trying and frying flames of greatest persecutions so patiently, as if (the soul exiled from the body by a divine meditation,) both body and soul were in part become senseless, and made to live, not where they live but where they love, that is to say, in Christ.

12. This made the holy men of God so full of devotion, so great despisers of the world as they were; their chiefest care was to meditate of the life of Christ. Festus thought St. Paul³ had overstudied himself in this learning, when all his mind was upon the world to come; but had Festus known the depth

³ Acts xxvi. 24.

of this knowledge, he would have thought the Apostle to have been learned indeed, by which he might and did teach men, by Christ's nakedness how to clothe them; by his meekness how to exalt them; by his praying for his enemies how to revenge them; that his stripes, his spear, his thorns, his wounds, his cross, were more dear and precious than all the diadems in the world. When we behold Christ in his passion, we see innocence suffering for sin, humility enduring torment for pride, righteousness for unrighteousness. What charity was that, which amidst so many pains besought God for the causers and actors of his persecution? What silence was that, which unto false accusers answered nothing?¹ What love was that, which was prodigal of life for his friend? no, for his very enemies? Never was there any such love as the love of the Son of God showed.

13. Merciful Lord, what a spacious field do we enter, when we consider the project of Christ's life? In whom we observe two natures, both resembled to Jacob's ladder², whereof the one part stayed upon the earth, which was his humanity; the other reached up to heaven, which was his deity. The descending angels by this ladder are God's

¹ John xix. 10.

² Gen. xxviii. 12.

mercies, the ascending are our penitent prayers; and therefore Christ is the mean whereby God descends in mercy towards men, and men ascend by grace and acceptation unto God. Wherefore from the first moment of his nativity unto his very ascension into heaven, there was nothing in his life which did not redound to our good: he spake no word, he did no action, but all tended to this end.

St. John in the Apocalypse, saith, that he beheld "a certain tree bearing twelve sorts of fruits, and giving fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree served to heal the nations therewith."³ This tree was the tree of life; and whom may it better resemble than Christ the author of life, whose sayings were the words of life, whose doings were the actions of life? The tree in the midst of paradise was the tree of life⁴, and so is Christ in the Church: the higher boughs of this tree serve for them that seek higher perfection; the lower, yea, the lowest, have their fruit to refresh all that desire to be refreshed. We should often call to mind the life of Christ, but when labours and troubles come, when by calamities we feel that we have offended; then we fall to comparison: when we endure hunger, we think of Christ's fasting; when we are tempted, we think of

³ Rev. xxii. 2.

⁴ Gen. ii. 17.

his leading into the wilderness: when we suffer reproaches, we call to mind his suffering, and lift up our hearts to heaven, and our souls to him, who bare our infirmities; and therefore he which endured miseries, we hope will best respect the case of the miserable; of whom we may say with the prophet, "Whom have we in heaven but thee?"

14. Some are not a little delighted to read the lives of the ancient worthies of the world, of Julius Cæsar, Scipio, and such other; but these may sooner delight the fancy, than instruct the soul. Come we to the life of Christ:—all their conflicts were but shadows, all their glory but froth, all their pomp but misery, to his conflicts, to his glory, who vanquished when he was conquered, and overcame death when he suffered death, subduing the prince of darkness with all his power, and with a few mean men made a conquest over the whole world, by a force in outward show, clean contrary to all victory; to wit, by his word, which in the sight of the world seemed feebleness.¹ What heart is not moved at the remembrance of all his worthy acts? Who would not celebrate unto the Lord a sweet sabbath of meditation, and hither bring all his prayers and praises? Surely we do little for him, who hath done so much for us, if we

¹ Orig. l. i. c. Cels.

keep not, at least a remembrance of so many graces, so many mercies bestowed upon us ?

15. God saith, "My delight is to be with the sons of men." And the godly say, "Our delight is to be with the Son of God." St. Jerome writeth of certain holy women, so devoted this way, That flesh (saith he) almost forgot that it was flesh²; they did so dwell in the contemplation of Jesus Christ, that they seemed in place only remote, but in affection to join with that holy company of the upper house, to behold the King of kings himself in person sitting under the state of glory. One finding the sweetness hereof, was fain to cry out, O Lord, thy sweetness is more than I am well able to bear !

16. Undoubtedly this meditation will cause the soul to approach unto Christ, and prefer his love so much, as it shall take it quite and clean from the inordinate love of the world, besides many other high and excellent effects. When Christ communed with Peter of love, the more he spake of love, the more it set an edge upon Peter's love; when he said, and replied again and again, "Thou knowest, Lord, I love thee."³

To this increase of love, it may be added,

² Ut caro esset pene nescia carnis.—*Hiero, in Regula Sanctimo.*

³ John xxi. 15.

how much this also helpeth for the direction of a Christian life : He is born a poor infant, O blessed poverty ! he is ever doing good, there is the virtue of most perfect bounty : he is despised of men, and endureth all, O exceeding patience ! he is crucified and yet prayeth for his crucifiers ; O wonderful charity ! being God from everlasting, he becomes obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross, O singular humility ! How may we arm ourselves by a meditation of these virtues, against the assaults of sin, which are ready to carry us away as captives to all impiety ?

17. Solomon saith of Wisdom, "Apply thy heart unto her, and she shall direct thee in all thy ways¹:" the same is said of the Author of all wisdom : apply thy heart unto him, and he shall direct thee in all thy goings : we cannot sufficiently meditate of him, in whom consisteth the accomplishment of our happiness to come.

Stories make mention, that the Athenians so highly esteemed Theseus, that in honour of his memorable acts, they erected a place called Asylum, whither the poor and distressed repairing, might find refuge.² How God hath exalted our Lord Jesus unto the right hand of his throne in glory, and there for his sake erected an Asylum of grace,

¹ Prov. iii. 6.

² Plut. in vit. Thes.

whither all sorrowful and afflicted minds repairing may plead privilege, faith in him doth tell us as much. When the accuser of the brethren doth lay a remembrance of their sins unto the charge of God's chosen, and thereby seeketh to cast them down by despair, by and by they fly to meditate of Christ's love, and how all-sufficient a sacrifice he was for the satisfaction of their sins, and how ready he is to embrace in the arms of his mercy, and cover under the shadow of his wings, all that cry and come unto him.

18. Who would cease to converse often, and to be conversant as it were by meditation with so loving a Redeemer? When good friends often break their minds each to other, it is a mean to increase amity; but on the contrary, when they seldom or never have conference, or think little one of another, they grow in time strangers: we break off from Christ so dear a friend, and estrange ourselves, having not the least occasion offered, when we neglect his society, refuse his company, care not for his conference, nay seldom or never so much as think of him as we ought.

19. Would we have a precedent of all perfection to stand before us? Why, Solomon's wisdom is but ignorance: Samson's strength but weakness: Hazael's swiftness but slowness: Methusalem's age not a day, being

once compared with the perfection of the Son of God. The loaves which Christ took were but few in number ; but when he brake them and his disciples distributed them, they did exceedingly increase and multiply.¹ The life of Christ wherein at first we consider his love, his power, it seems not so much ; but falling to meditate hereupon, and to distribute it, as it were, amongst faithful believers, it increaseth so wonderfully as we can only say with them in the Gospel, " We never saw it after this fashion ;" in effect, we never thought it so admirable.

20. The people in the wilderness had a cloud over them to direct their passage towards the land of promise ; as the cloud moved, they all moved, that standing, there they stood² ; wherefore, still they looked unto the motion of the cloud which was their loadstar all the way : we have for our journey not a cloud from heaven, but the life of the Son of God sitting now at the right hand of the Father in heaven, upon whom the eye of our soul evermore fixed, we go forward and stay as this heavenly direction shall give us aim.

21. Last of all, how mindful we should be to meditate of Christ, not only in respect of the time present, but chiefly for the time to come ! this was in St. Paul's thought when

¹ Mark. vi. 38. Luke ix. 16.

² Exod. xiii. 21.

he thought of his departure hence, desiring to be dissolved and to be with Christ. Jacob leaving the world, his mind was upon Shiloh, or on him whom God would send, when he said, "Lord, I will wait for thy salvation."³ "O Jesu," saith St. Austin, "whether I speak of thee, I write of thee, I read of thee, methinks I am present with thee⁴," as if a remembrance of his Redeemer did wake with him, and sleep with him, yea such a remembrance as slept with Stephen, who calling on the name of the Lord Jesus, and commending his spirit into his hands, he sleeping died, or dying slept.

22. The law was a shadow of good to come, this good was Christ; when the sun is behind, the shadow is before; when the sun is before, the shadow is behind: so was it in Christ; to them of old the sun was behind, to us before; and so now the ceremonies of the law are behind and left.

The fathers ate manna in the desert; we have the living bread which came down from heaven; they were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea⁵, they did all eat of the spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual rock, which rock was Christ. In blessing their posterities the patriarchs mentioned the promised seed, in comforting

³ Gen. xlix. 18.

⁴ Aug. Med.

⁵ 1 Cor. x. 1.

the distressed the prophets foretold the Saviour to come. All their solemn sacrifices were but shadows, and signs of some excellent subject; their many hymns and divine songs were rejoicings at his coming before he came; in their highest devotions nothing was more mentioned than that God would respect his people, and Abraham; to whom in mercy the multiplying of the same mercy by the promised offspring was mentioned. So by this we see, the faithful all along minded nothing more than him, in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

23. For the believers under grace, so much should they be addicted to meditate of him who wrought the work of their blessed redemption, as that they should have their hearts replenished with a daily and incessant revolving of the same; wherefore they are said with the blessed Virgin to be even the mother of the Son of God. She conceived in her womb, they in their faith¹; she nursed him, they nurse him; the Word was incarnated in her, the Word is incarnate in them; she was his mother according to the flesh, they according to the spirit.

“Now can the mother forget her child?” saith the prophet; or should believers forget Christ which is so near and dear unto

¹ Mark iii. 35.

them? The angels said unto the shepherds, "He is born to you:" but in this mystery it may be said unto the faithful, "He is born in you." Sarah, to her great consolation after her long barrenness, conceived Isaac her joy²: the faithful after their love of earthly things, applying themselves to this divine meditation, conceive Christ Jesus their joy.

CHAPTER II.

That the life of a Christian should be passed over in this world in a holy and virtuous conversation.

It is the manner of princes and governors, forthwith upon their investures to places of greatest dignity, seriously to recount with themselves, to what authority amongst men God hath called them, what to do, how to govern, and, in conclusion, which way to demean themselves, like themselves; that is to say, answerable unto their place and calling. This care we find to have been in king Solomon³, who besought God, before riches and honour, to give him an understanding heart. No less regard should a Christian man have, whom God in mercy

² Gen. xxi. 3.

³ 2 Chron. i. 10

hath called to the state of grace, no less regard, I say, should he have forthwith to sit down and consider for what cause he was redeemed, to what end; what will one day be required at his hands, upon his return by him that sent him hither; and hereupon to apply himself to walk, as the Apostle speaketh, worthy of his vocation whereunto he is called¹, with all humbleness of mind; and break out into that of the prophet, "What shall I do unto the Lord for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?"²

2. When Naaman the Syrian was healed of his leprosy³, and saw that by the power of God he was become a sound man, he was so moved to acknowledge this benefit, that while his body might be in the house of Rimmon, a false god, yet when he came there he made a solemn vow, the knees of his soul should bow to the true God, whom he perceived to have done him good. When Peter's wife's mother was cured of her fever, she rose up and ministered unto Christ⁴: when the people saw the care of Joshua, which he undertook to bring them into the land of Canaan, they all said as it were with one heart, "O Joshua, all that thou commandest, we will do; and whither soever thou sendest us,

¹ Eph. iv 1.

² 2 Kings v. 18.

³ Psalm cxvi. 12.

⁴ Matt. viii. 15.

we will go.”⁵ We have received a greater cure than ever Naaman did when he received the cleansing from his leprosy ; or than Peter’s wife’s mother, when at Christ’s word her fever left her. Some bending of our hearts, some ministering unto Christ should be remembered ; and let our Joshua have his due, who is leading us to the land of promise.

3. When Zacharias mentioned the love of God in visiting and redeeming his people, in raising them up a mighty salvation, in delivering them from the hands of their enemies, first showing what God had done for them ; he then consequently annexeth the end of all, and what they should do to God : to wit, “To walk before him in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.”⁶ This the Apostle showeth in more express words at large : “The grace of God hath appeared, that bringeth salvation unto all ; and teacheth us that we should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts ; that we should live soberly and godly in this present world, looking for the blessed appearance of the glory of the mighty God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ⁷ ;” thereby showing our first entrance into grace, and therewith the works of grace, and then in order the appearance of glory. For what else doth grace require but the works of grace ?

⁵ Josh. i. 16.

⁶ Luke i. 75.

⁷ Tit. ii. 12.

And therefore we beseech God, that we fall not amongst thieves, as the man that passed between Jerusalem and Jericho¹, which would spoil us of this precious garment, and the true use thereof. "Lord (saith David), keep thy servant from presumptuous sins, that they get not the dominion over me."² What! should the children of light have to do with the works of darkness? what! should Christians walk according to the flesh, who are by Christ their redeemer regenerate, and born anew according to the spirit?³ "Alexander (saith Quintus Curtius) willed that the Grecians and the barbarians should be no longer distinguished by garments; but let Grecians," said he, "be known by their virtues, and barbarians by their vices." The application is plain; let Christians be known by Christian behaviour.

4. When Almighty God had brought his people from the oppression of Pharaoh, and they were now towards a land which should flow with milk and honey; Moses soberly adviseth the people after this manner, and tells them what God doth look for at their hands. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, even that thou serve him?"⁴ If he be thy God, then will he have

¹ Luke x. 30.

² Psal. xix. 13.

³ Rom. xiii. 12.

⁴ Deut. x. 12.

thy worship. St. Peter unto the dispersed Jews and converted Christians, saith: You were not a people, but now are the people of God, and therefore should walk as the children of God; you are light now, because you are called unto the doctrine of light, in him who was a light to all that believe.⁵ A people that sat in darkness (saith the prophet) have seen a light, "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel."⁶ "The night is passed and the day is at hand; let us therefore cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light."⁷ All which, as it inferreth a dignity in that we are called, so also a duty is there in this calling required; a small sin in the world is notwithstanding great in one professing Christ.

St. Bernard thought it a thing prodigious in nature, to have the first place, and the lowest life; a high calling, and some abject course of living: because the calling to place of dignity doth challenge unto itself the greater excellency.⁸ "What profiteth it thee saith St. Austin) to be called the thing thou art not?"⁹ To bear the title of a Christian and to be in action nothing less? To be a Chris-

⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 10.⁶ Isaiah ix. 2.⁷ Rom. xiii. 12.⁸ Bern. lib. ii. Confid. ad Eug.⁹ Quid prodest vocari quod non es?—*Aug. de vit. Christiana.*

tian in name, but not in deed; to seem, and not to be? to have the voice of Jacob, but the hands of Esau; one thing in show, but another in substance?" "What! dost thou (saith St. Cyprian) rush in with a blind heady zeal, thou knowest not whither, nor how, extinguishing peace and charity the true lights of a Christian life? certainly these vices are as blemishes in the face of our profession."¹

5. Aulus Fulvius, perceiving his son gotten upon the wings of pride, and associating himself with Catiline, that firebrand of the commonwealth, comes and takes him aside, and scolds him after this manner: "Thou unthrift, have I brought thee up for such an end?" When we find our affections inclining to foul desires, let us say unto ourselves, as Aulus Fulvius said unto his son, "Is this the end why God hath given us our being, and well-being? Were we redeemed from sin, to continue in the lusts thereof? Were we freed from the servitude of the world, to become servants of so bad a lord? Why were we redeemed unto good works? Should so great a price bestowed for us be cast away? God forbid."

To come to a consideration of ourselves, and to call to mind our adoption, whereby we are now the children of God, having received

¹ Cypr. de Zelo et Liv.

that Spirit that makes us to cry, "Abba, Father:" if God be our Father then must we remember that which he requireth; "Be you holy, as I am holy."²

The duty of the child is the father's honour; we are resembled unto the branches, and Christ unto the vine³; every branch that beareth not fruit, which fruit is a good life, the husbandman, which is God, taketh away.

We are compared unto fruitful trees planted by the water or pleasant streams of God's graces, and therefore should bring forth fruit in due season⁴: we may remember the curse of the fig tree that bare leaves, some show only of fruit⁵; and that sentence denounced, "The axe is laid to the root of the tree, every tree that bringeth not forth fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire⁶;" the axe, death; the cutting down, the execution of justice; the casting into the fire, the sentence of judgment.

Daniel said unto Nebuchadnezzar, which John the Baptist in effect said to every one who was fruitless, "This tree is thyself⁷;" but for the good tree which, our Saviour saith, bringeth forth good fruit, it shall be like the green olive planted by the house of God.⁸ "Blessed is the man (saith Jeremiah⁹) that

² 1 Pet. i. 16.

⁵ Matt. xxi. 19.

⁸ Matt. vii. 17.

³ John xv. 2.

⁶ Luke iii. 9.

⁹ Jer. xvii. 7.

⁴ Ps. i. 3.

⁷ Dan. iv. 19.

trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for he shall be as a tree that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not feel when the heat cometh ; but her leaf shall be green, and shall not care for the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

And thus as the negligent are resembled unto barren heath or trees twice dead, and plucked up by the roots ; as vain professors are compared unto trees which bear leaves, or at least fruit in show, like apples of Gomorrah which are gone as soon as you touch them, so are the religious and devoted to the worship of God most fitly likened to good and fruitful trees, grafted upon the true stock Christ Jesus himself, planted in that vineyard whose keeper is the Lord of Hosts, and looks at our hands for better than wild grapes.¹

6. In the eleventh of the Acts and six-and-twentieth [verse], were the disciples first called by this name, Christians, a name of great sanctity, from anointing, a ceremony used amongst the ancient people of God, upon none but those whom they accounted holy, and had a holy calling, as their kings, their priests, their prophets ; and therefore should Christians be as John the Baptist, whose name was holy, whose teaching was holy, whose life was holy,

¹ Isaiah v. 1.

all agreeing in one. "He was a burning light, not only burning," saith St. Bernard, "as zealous in fervency, but a light also as conspicuous in charity."²

But whence, saith Isidore, have we this title? Even from Christ are we called Christians, surely a great prerogative: He hath graced us with his own name, cleansed us with his own blood, enlightened us with his own Spirit, chosen us unto himself as an acceptable people, "following good works."³ The Apostle saith, "We are bought or redeemed with a price;" if it be so, then are we his who hath paid our ransom, and consequently are bound to do his will willingly, who hath bought out our freedom: "We are not debtors," saith he, "to the flesh⁴:" as if he should have said, We are debtors and owe dutiful service to another Lord, and to live after his will. Sarah saw but Ishmael playing with Isaac, and she said unto Abraham, "Put away thy bondwoman with her son;" it is not safe for the soul to be dwelling with the flesh, cast out the bondwoman and her offspring of desires⁵: the playing of Ishmael with Isaac, the Holy Ghost, by the Apostle, called a persecution.⁶ One saith, "This body of ours will not let us to be right philosophers;" but

² Ber. in Nat. Joan.

³ 1 Cor. vi. 20.

⁴ Rom. viii. 12.

⁵ Gen. xxi. 10.

⁶ Gal. iv. 29.

sure, it is this corrupt nature of ours, unless we did repress the affections thereof, which would not permit us to be right Christians. "There is a serpent within us," saith Macarius, "that will entice with an argument from pleasure¹: the forbidden tree is most fair; forbidden pleasures, forbidden ways are most delightful." "Had we (saith St. Bernard) stood by, when Adam was between the persuasion of his wife, and the precept of his God, when the one said, Adam, eat, and the other, Adam, thou shalt not eat; would we not have cried out, and said, O Adam, take heed what thou doest? the woman is deceived. The counsel we would give to Adam let us apply to ourselves; and never hearken to the counsel of the flesh, seeing the condition of Christians is to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."²

The Apostle calleth the desires of the flesh deceivable, because they deceive³; and whereas other sins are mentioned by one name, this of the flesh is mentioned by many; as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, wantonness; which show how vile it is. It is said, Fly from sin as from a serpent, but of all sins fly⁴ fornication, saith the Holy Ghost, for this serpent stingeth to death.

7. But is it credible that Christian profes-

¹ A jucundo.—*Macari. Hom.*

² Eph. iv. 22.

³ Rom. viii. 1.

⁴ Gal. v. 19.

sion should in any age put on masking attire, and play her part upon the stage? or, that those who bear the name of Christians should endeavour like cunning jugglers to cast a mist before the sight of the simple; work dissimulation in so fine a web; cast such gloss upon all, as if all were holy, like hot meteors in the air which shoot and show like stars, but are in deed nothing less. For deceive men they may, God they cannot: nay, they may one day find they deceived themselves; if they spend an hour or two now and then in godly exercises, though all the week after they live in contention and envy, they think themselves good Christians.

In the comedy of Menander there is a Hercules, but not true Hercules; in the course of the world there is a Herod, that pretends worship, but intends the life of an innocent babe⁵: there is an Ahab that proclaims a fast, thereby to compass Naboth's vineyard.⁶ But all is not gold that glisters. "He is not a Jew which is outwardly a Jew, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the show, but he is a Jew which is one within; and the circumcision is of the heart, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God."⁷ One man discerneth another by his habit, God by his heart.

⁵ Matt. ii. 8.

⁶ 1 Kings xxi. 12.

⁷ Rom. ii. 29.

“The ark,” saith Origen, “was it pitched without only?¹ no, but within and without.” “The king’s daughter,” saith the Psalmist, “was glorious,” was this glory outward? no, she was “glorious within.” The coat of Christ was without seam, the conversation of Christians should be plain and honest without dissimulation: lest their calling suffer indignity amongst men.

Let vain boasters talk of profession so long as they will, and make religion, as they do, a mere talk: unless they show devotion to God, humble and charitable behaviour towards men, are they right Christians? no, verily. When one ill-affected was now about to be salving his sore fingers, a certain physician, perceiving by his countenance his liver was corrupt, “My friend,” quoth he, “seek to salve what is amiss within.”

8. At the end of the day, shall it be said, Call those discourses? no, Call the labourers, give them the penny.² St. James saith, Show me thy faith by thy works; I am a mortal man, and cannot search the heart.³ Hast thou faith? let me see it by thy actions of life. Is it a lively faith? Why, where life is, there motion is. “We are not (saith Cyprian) philosophers in words, but in works:” he is not a physician, which is a physician in name.

¹ Orig. in Num.

² Matt. xx. 8.

³ James ii. 18.

It was said indeed unto him that came to the marriage⁴, "Friend," but if we mark the sequel, it was in effect said, "Friend in profession," but nothing so in action, in name but not in nature, "how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment?" "When you see," says St. Chrysostom⁵, "the leaves withered, you may guess the tree is not sound at the root: when you see the actions of life but so so, is all well at the root? Are we not rooted in faith? the bud, the leaf, the flower, the fruit, all is from the root." The fire so long as it is fire, it hath heat; and faith so long as it is faith, it hath effects. Wherefore we must take heed that we deal not with our holy calling, as Hanun did with David's servants⁶, when he disguised them and cut their garments in the midst. Let us not separate that which God hath joined together, a good profession, and a good conversation; good learning, and good living.

9. Look we into the lives of the former Christians, whose remembrance we honour in our very thoughts, and whose virtues we cannot but admire; if we read their lives, we shall find that the whole course was a continual exercise of piety: they were just in promise, they needed no other surety but

⁴ Matt. xxii. 12.

⁵ Greg. Mor. Chrysost. opera imperfect. Hom. 32.

⁶ 2 Sam. x. 4.

their word ; moderate in diet, plain in attire, keeping a decorum in all their actions. With Simeon they did not only see Christ with their eyes, but also take him up in their hands and carry him about in their lives : we are, for the most, Christians in show ; they were Christians in deed : we outwardly profess somewhat, but there is a heart within means nothing less : they inwardly and outwardly were the same.

Tertullian setting down the hardest censure of their greatest adversaries, saith, "That excepting they would not sacrifice unto their idols, their holiness was such, as it made their very persecutors to stand amazed at them and to cry out, What a misery is this, that we are more weary of tormenting, than these men are of enduring torments !" ¹ Nay, it made the greatest emperors themselves to fear poor Christians, as Herod did John Baptist, because he was a holy man, and one that feared God.

St. Basil affirmeth that the very beholding of their constancy in suffering, made many heathen men suffer with them. ² The devout life of a poor captive Christian woman, as Sozomen writeth ³, made a king and all his family embrace the faith of Jesus Christ : and Eusebius ⁴ showeth, that Maximinus the em-

¹ Tert. Apol.

² De quad. Mart.

³ Sozomen, lib. vii.

⁴ Euseb. lib. ix. c. 8.

peror could not but wonder to see how sedulous they were in doing good. When their very enemies were even consumed with misery, they took from their own sustenance, and small store they had, to relieve them; they buried their dead, and never ceased to follow them with the works of charity. They were so religious, so humble, so just, so charitable, as they made great tyrants to give out edicts with Nebuchadnezzar⁵, that none should worship any other god, but the God of the Christians. Julian the apostate, writing to Arsadius, bishop of Cappadocia, said, "This same religion which they call Christian, is spread far and wide by reason of the great beneficence which those whom they call Christians do show to all mortal men, of what religion soever."⁶ Whence we see that the greatest enemy of the faith of Christ could not but acknowledge the sincerity of former Christians. Merciful Lord, to compare our coldness with their fervency in devotion, our negligence with their industry, our faint love with their true-meaning charity, we shall find such odds as we may sorrow to see our own defects in this case. Calling to mind the learning of the ancient fathers, we may think

⁵ Dan. iii. 29.

⁶ Christiana religio propter Christianorum erga omnes cujusvis religionis mortales beneficentiam propagata est.

they did nothing but read ; seeing their works, that they did nothing but write ; considering their devotion, that they did nothing but pray.

10. How was God glorified in these ? and how is God glorified in us, when we truly serve him ? To this end Christ willed his Disciples, that their “Light should shine before men¹,” and St. Peter exhorteth, that “By our good works we glorify God in the day of visitation²,” in effect, that we honour Christ by our Christian behaviour, “Which behaviour,” saith St. Cyprian, “is to do the will of God ; which will is, that we have steadfastness in faith, modesty in words, uprightness in action, in works mercy, in manners discipline, and peace towards our brethren ; and so forth. Ought not our uprightness to be inwardly because unto God, outwardly because unto the glory of God ?”³

“By this,” saith our Saviour, “shall men know that you are my disciples⁴,” when he spake of love : which love is the accomplishment of the whole law. Every general in the field hath his colours, whereby he and his

¹ Matt. v. 16.

² 1 Pet. ii. 12.

³ *Stabilitatem in fide, modestiam in verbis, in factis justitiam, in operibus misericordiam, in moribus disciplinam, cum fratribus pacem, etc.—Cyprian. in Orat. Domini.*

⁴ John xiii. 34.

company are known: holiness is Christ's banner, under which we all train and keep a seemly Christian march, following Christ our Captain and finisher of our faith. Our enemies are the assaults of sin and temptations of Satan; our weapons are the "Shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit⁵;" our conquest is a crown of glory. "I have fought (saith the Apostle) a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; from henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."⁶

11. Look we up into heaven, Who are there rejoicing? who are now triumphant in glory, but those who were sometime militant in the works of grace? Who are now in that celestial society of angels, and there behold the presence of God himself, but the pure in heart, and those who sometime lived godly in the world?⁷ To cast our eyes downward: to whom is that woful dungeon of darkness so often denounced, but unto dissolute and loose servants, who never think on their master's return, and the account which will one day be required at their hands? The schoolmen will distinguish of a double punishment, the one Damni, and the other Sensus; the one of loss, and the other of feeling: of loss, when they lose for ever in glory

⁵ Eph. vi. 17.

⁶ 2 Tim. iv. 7.

⁷ Matt. v. 8.

him whom they would not receive, so often offering himself unto them for a time: of feeling, they would not endure the pain of a little repentance, and therefore shall suffer the punishment of eternal pain.

12. Of all figures (say the mathematicians a circle is the most absolute, because the beginning and end concur in one: such is our holy conversation, which comes from God by grace, and ends in God by the works of grace: all our actions are from him, as the beams from the sun, as the smell from the flower, as the sparks from the fire. The sun is dispersed by his beams, the flowers by their smell, the fire by the sparks from thence proceeding. God is seen in his creatures, admired in his works, but most glorified in his servants, the sons of men.

We know there is in man somewhat more than man. Christ said unto the Pharisees when the Herodians showed him a tribute penny, "Whose image or superscription is this?"¹ When we find in ourselves a most divine and heavenly resemblance, whose image is this? methinks we cannot but reply, Assuredly it is our heavenly Cæsar's! and therefore give we unto him the homage of our hearts, and if we have a thousand hearts, let us pay them all in tribute. The angels in

¹ Matt. xxii. 20.

heaven look for us ; no, Jesus Christ himself the Lord of angels expects us, whom he hath chosen to be heirs of glory : should we follow the world, then may we fear the punishment of the world. What is it to gain a farm, with him who would go to see his farm, and lose heaven ?² what is it to be married to the momentary pleasures of a sinful life, and for ever and ever be divorced from Christ ?

There are in holy scripture promises laid down of a happy state to come. It may be well applied, which was misapplied in the trial of the holy man Job, " We do not serve God for nothing." As sure as God is God, the righteous shall receive a reward. We know that man is immortal, and that his happiness is not here ; though that part which we see (saith Philo the learned Jew³) be mortal, and perish for a time ; yet there is a time to come, when it shall be raised, and there is a part in man which abides for ever.

13. Children when they are young love their nurses more than their true and natural mothers ; but coming to riper years, they then love where they chiefly ought : we are awhile addicted to the world, and lose ourselves in the love thereof, but upon mature judgment we see that God only should have our love, and duties of love. It is the manner of some

² Luke xiv. 18.

³ Philo de Fabrica Mundi.

nations (saith one) for the inferior first to salute their superiors, and it is the custom again of other countries as a sign of benediction, going downward, for the superior first to salute the inferior. This custom Almighty God himself observeth with men: first he salutes us by his benefits, and then we salute him by our obedience; first he loveth us as a father, then we honour him as children: should we with the fed hawk forget our Master? or being full with God's benefits, like the moon, be then most removed from the sun, from whence comes all her light, and then by the imposition of earthly desires become dark? Hath Christ done so much for us, and should we seem to be carried away into the land where all things are forgotten? "At that dreadful day of doom, the greatest part of the evidence," saith St. Cyprian¹, "that Satan will bring in against careless men is the neglect of their dutiful serving the Lord Jesus; when he shall say, O Eternal Judge, as for these I never benefited them, I never endured labour or travail to redeem them, and yet have they followed me; I no sooner tempted them to evil but they obeyed me. Thou camest from heaven, and enduredst many things in the world to win them, and yet they never followed thee; thou didst shed thy most precious

¹ Cypr. de Opere et Eleemos.

blood to ~~save~~ them, and yet they would never worship thee." Hitherto St. Cyprian.

14. How can we then omit the performance of our Christian duty? Should it be said of holiness, as it was once in another case, "We have heard report of such a matter²," and so let it go? Will our lip-worship serve the turn? The foolish virgins were found with their "So saying³," but the good servants shall be found with their "So doing."⁴

Our Isaac will not only hear Jacob's voice⁵; but "Come hither, my son, let me have thy hands too," and then receive a fatherly benediction.

In the seventh of St. Luke, John sends his disciples to Christ to know whether he were the Messiah that should come into the world, or they should look for another? The answer our Saviour returneth is this: "Tell John what you have heard and seen." What you have heard only? No, but "heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the poor receive the Gospel."⁶ "He doth neither affirm, nor deny," saith Beda, "but would rather have his works testify of him, than that he would testify of himself."⁷

Christ came from heaven to do his Father's

² Job xxviii. 22.

³ Matt. xxv. 2.

⁴ Luke xii. 43.

⁵ Gen. xxvii. 22.

⁶ Luke vii. 22.

⁷ Bed. in Lu.

will in earth, and we here on earth do his will who is ascended up into heaven. To whom was that applied but unto Christians—"This is the will of God, even your holiness?"¹

15. To comprehend many things with the circle of a short conclusion, the sum of all is, "There is nothing more sweet than to serve God:"² When Pythagoras heard a vicious fellow affirm he had rather spend his time in wanton company than amongst the sour philosophers: "No marvel," said he, "for swine had rather be tumbling in the mire than laid in the cleanest places of all."

There is no peace comparable to that which is wont to accompany Christian conversation. It is said of the Dioscorides, men living far remote, yet professing Christian religion, that dwelling in the midst of the sea, yet have they not the use of ships; they live with such quiet and content in their estate, or without any desire of seeking superfluity. "Who shall ascend (saith the prophet) unto the hill of the Lord, but even he that hath pure hands, and hath not lifted up his mind to vanity? he shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."³

Nature hath taught the Bombyx, a small worm providing before for her end, first to

¹ *Thess.* iv. 3.

² *Ecclus.* xxiii. 27.

³ *Ps.* xxiv. 3. 5, 6.

wind herself all in silk, and then becoming white and winged in shape of a flying thing, she dieth : let grace lead us in the same course, first clothing ourselves with that precious silk, Christ's merits ; and then become white, for innocency and holiness of life ; and last of all, with the wings of faith and hope prepare ourselves to fly to that heavenly repose of our everlasting rest.

CHAPTER III.

That the end of a Christian life is endless felicity in the life to come.

MOST sure it is that the end of man, or man's felicity which is his end, is not consisting in any thing here below, but in a state supernal, and therefore to be sought above ; yet it remaineth that we enter a little into the consideration of this end, as also of the mean precedent unto the same. Infinite were it to show how the philosophers of old, as men in a winter's night, amidst many strange and unknown ways, did run and range they knew not whither : infinite were it (I say) to set down how they spent all their life poring in the dark (if we respect

the life of grace), in seeking and searching out man's chiefest end. Some would have it to consist in pleasure: why if pleasure were man's chief happiness, then beasts were happy: if sensual life be man's end, then is he oft ended by his end. Some would have it to consist in riches, in honour, and the like: if man's chief happiness, and the end, were placed in these, then were man worse than a clod of earth, or puff of wind, because the end is ever better than those things which are tending unto the end: last of all, if man's chiefest good consisted in things mortal, then where becomes the felicity of the soul, which is a substance immortal?

2. To leave these in the maze of their own fancies, and roving in the air at an uncertain mark, our Christian faith (blessed be God) teacheth us to mount higher, and to behold another end, which cannot be worn out, and therefore is not subject to fear; full of all happiness, and therefore is able to satisfy our desires to the full. The difference then between those who remained in the foggy mist of Egypt, and them whom God hath in mercy placed in the little land of Goshen, is this: they to an uncertain, but we direct all our actions unto a most sure and certain end: they hope for somewhat in show, we somewhat in deed: they are about the delight of the sense, we in the perfect contentment of

the soul, in looking up to those joys whither all our endeavours do jointly run as unto the sole period of all our being. Well is that state wherein nothing is wanting. Peter cried out (and we may all cry out with him), "Lord, it is good for us to be here¹:" being freed from sin we are made the servants of God, our fruit is holiness, our reward is everlasting life.

3. Man is never more heavenly than when he begins to consider his end, which is to live in heaven. Wherefore what should we but take order with ourselves to bend all our actions to this end? All our ploughing tends to the hope of this harvest.² Will we hear what the Apostle saith; nay, will we hear what he was not able to say concerning the excellency of this end? "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, heart cannot conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."³ The glorification of man is a state inexplicable, and, therefore, to enter into it were to wade into a bottomless sea: faith only is the mean whereby we can approach and see but the "back parts," as Moses in the cleft when the glory of God passed by.⁴

"It doth not yet appear," saith St. John,

¹ Matt. xvii. 4.

² 2 Cor. ix. 10.

³ 1 Cor. ii. 9.

⁴ Exod. xxxiii. 22.

“ what we shall be, but that happy time will come when it shall appear, and then we shall be like unto him¹.” “At that day shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father² :” a marvellous saying of Christ our Saviour, and in human sense almost incredible, that the children of God shall shine and become as clear as the sun, when all the powers of the mind, all the senses of the body, shall be satisfied with the fruition of God. In him we shall enjoy all the variety of times that delight us here ; all the beauty of creatures that allure us here ; all the pleasures and joys that content us here : with what love of this felicity should we be inflamed ? how should we long after that state wherein all labours and travels have an end ?

4. The end considered, the mean precedent unto this end remaineth to be observed. For the mean, only this, religion is the way leading to a Christian life ; a Christian life is the gate, whereby we enter into the confines of this sanctuary ; for therein first we take up the merits of Christ in the arms of our faith, and next, walk with Simeon in the temple or service of God in all uprightness of life.

Now whereas we desire the content of our will, naturally to be well ; and the exercise of our wit to have a certain end ; and this end to

¹ 1 John iii. 2.

² Matt. xiii. 43.

be the particular good, benefit, and welfare of all our being, let us, in the name of God, resolve upon the counsel of the prophet Jeremiah, to seek the good way, and walk therein, that we may find rest unto our souls.³ Man who is immortal, what should he else tend unto, but an immortal end? Let the epicure propose unto himself pleasure, the atheist plots and castles in the air; the Christian hath where to rest his soul, knowing that the end of his being in the world was to serve God, and the end of serving God is to enjoy endless joys in the world to come. For it cannot be, but that he for whom the world was made, should have some further end more excellent than the world, for the accomplishment of which, he never ceaseth until he be there; as all natural things tend unto the centre, and when they are there, they would not be removed.

5. Now, whereas it is not a written law, but a law that is born within us, which we have not read, or heard, but drawn as it were from the paps and dugs of nature herself, to seek a state of happiness; knowing both wherein this doth consist, as also the way of attaining the same, how can we but go forward in that happy course tending, as hath been showed, unto that happy end? "In which course

³ Jer. vi. 16.

of a Christian life," saith St. Basil¹, "there is a reward, a reward indeed rendered not according to the recompence due to the work, but according to the munificence of God." Be it far above the work, and not according to the desert thereof, but the magnificence of him that rewardeth the work, as in truth it is, yet can it not but encourage us to go forward in the performance of the same. When king Alphonsus was persuaded, as stories mention, not to attempt war for fear of imminent danger, "I fear not danger," quoth he, "for who hath ever attained victory without adventuring dangers?" Distrust, and fear of difficulty, doth often dissuade us from the prosecuting and pursuing of this reward; if all difficulty should dismay us, then how should we attain our hoped end? for who hath ever attained the same end since the foundations of the world without labour and travail? Christ himself went not up into glory, but first he suffered pain.

One being asked whether he would rather be Socrates or Cræsus? the one an industrious and painful philosopher, the other a man flowing in all abundance? answered, "that for this life he would be Cræsus, but for the life to come, Socrates:" thereby showing that here rich men are happy, but hereafter good men are happy: now of the two, future happiness is the better.

¹ Basil. in Ps. cxiv.

6. By all this it hath been proved, how desirable a thing it is unto man, to attain his wished end, for the attaining whereof he must apply himself wholly hereunto ; neither may the Christian man of all other think himself exempted in this case. When Christ cured the blind man in the Gospel², his least touching, nay, his word only, was sufficient to have restored him his sight ; yet to show how he required industry, the blind man must go and wash at the pool of Siloam. The Apostle had received it by a divine vision, that none with him in the ship should perish³ : what then must all be secure, and wilfully cast themselves into the sea ? No, that were to have tempted their preserver ; but when the case so requireth, every one must endeavour himself to use the mean ordained to save himself. We sail in this mortal life with contrary winds ; some time there is a tempest, and anon cometh a calm ; the one is ready to make us doubt of God by impatience, the other, to forget him by security. Therefore four principal virtues we must ever exercise in this passage : The love of God, The hate of sin, The hope of mercy, and The fear of justice, which shall ever guide us in a right Christian course unto our end, all the way meditating that God is an ocean-sea of infinite goodness,

² John ix. 11.

³ Acts xxvii. 44.

and that by this he first created the world; by this he still guideth it; by this he suffereth many injuries offered unto his most sacred name; by this he causeth the sun to rise upon the good and evil; by this he maketh the rain to come down upon the just and sinners; by this he hath ordained man so many means and helps to come unto him; and last of all, by this he would not be alone in a state of high excellence, but hath vouchsafed his creatures, men and angels, to be partakers with him, and in a manner consorts of his glory. Could ever man so much desire his own good, as he is now brought unto it by the goodness of his God? No marvel, though Satan do so much envy this happiness of man, from which he is miserably fallen. "O the depth of the wisdom, of the riches, of the mercy of God!"

7. Who is able sufficiently to express the great dignity of our Christian calling, the end whereof is so joyful? All the labour of a religious life is no way comparable unto the excellency hereof; our fasting, our praying (the chief matter we are to attend), our serving of God is the best time bestowed of all other. Those things which are joyful when they come, do comfort us before they come. Faith saith, "There is a great and costly banquet prepared:" Hope saith, "This banquet is prepared for me." Things of the world are subject to mutability, strife, discord, envy;

but the time will come when the sheep shall no more fear the wolf: the glorification of man in the life to come is such, as he shall cry out with David, "Lord, what am I, that thou hast brought me to this?"¹

8. Tell me now, if there be any state or condition in the world comparable unto a Christian life, passed over in the exercises of devotion and piety, seeing the end thereof is such as it is? What happiness do they lose that neglect so great a price proposed unto them, for the vain pleasures and sensual delights of a sinful life! It is said of one Lysimachus, who being in battle against the Scythians, only for the satisfying of his appetite, and procuring a little liquor to stay thirst, gave himself over into his enemies' hands; that when he was now leading away captive to perpetual misery, he then began to acknowledge in these words, his own folly, "O Lord (saith he), for how little pleasures, what liberty, what felicity have I lost!" seeing his countrymen return home with joy, and himself haled along by his enemies to remain in misery.

Oh, that men would consider Lysimachus his case, and not lose their eternal liberty, for some momentary and fading delights! What a woeful case will it be to see themselves lead-

¹ 2 Sam. vii. 18.



ing to that rueful servitude, and to behold the servants of God going in triumphant manner to rejoice and live with him in glory?¹ Wherefore leaving all allurements, let them go forward to the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, knowing that The trial of their faith (as St. Peter saith) is much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire², that it may be found to their praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ whom they have not seen, and yet love him; in whom now (though they see him not) yet do they believe, and rejoice with joy unspeakable, and glorious, receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. The mother of Lemuel exhorted her son not to be won with the vanities of the world; for why? he was a man of worth³: We are of worth who are reserved to so happy an end. When the people were in captivity at Babylon, they ever made their prayers towards Jerusalem, whither they did hope one day to return.⁴

Now the end considered, the means precedent unto this end would ever more be remembered. Joshua said, "I and my house will serve the Lord⁵:" That there is an estate and condition of felicity in the life to come,

¹ Phil. iii. 14.

² 1 Pet. i. 7.

³ Prov. xxxi. 1, 2.

⁴ Dan. vi. 10.

⁵ Josh. xxiv. 15.

none will deny, unless he denies God : that this estate and condition is the pearl for which we should sell all that we have, we know, or cannot but know.

CHAPTER IV.

That the best direction to attain endless felicity, is to follow the example of Christ our Saviour, who was not only a sacrifice for sin, but also the most perfect pattern for imitation.

CHRIST the Messiah and Saviour of the world, as he became a Mediator between God and man, so was he partaker of both natures, for the reconciliation of both : otherwise, merciful Lord, what had become of us sinners ? As he was God, he was the object of our faith, as he was man, the instruction of our life : as he gave himself unto the Father, a sacrifice, by whom we were redeemed, so did he exhibit himself unto all believers an example of holiness, of whom he will be followed : So he pleased God by his sacrifice, and bound man unto him in love and duty by his example. Therefore was he the sum of the law and gospel : the law, teaching us what to do ; the gospel, what to believe : in Christ therefore, both believing and doing concur in one. The scope of the law was the avoiding of sin, and

of the gospel, a satisfaction for sin : the law drives us to grace : and as it enableth us in the performing hereof, so also it returns us to plead in Christ a satisfaction of the law.

To show in the first place that he was a satisfaction for sin, it is an axiom so generally received on all parts, as all in a manner join hands in this, "Oh ! it is the blood of Jesus that cleanseth us from all our sins." This is a sure confession of faith, upon which we stay as the house upon the foundation ; Adam eat the apple, Christ paid the price.¹

"Our righteousness (saith St. Austin) where is it ? It is the righteousness of the Son of God that must do us good." "It sufficeth for my justice only (saith St. Bernard) to have him reconciled, against whom only I have sinned² : " "Yea, (saith St. Jerome) when we confess our sins, which we cannot but do, our righteousness consisteth not in merit, but in mercy³ : " men may argue and toss matters to and fro, speaking this or that of merit ; but come to the touch, open the closet of the conscience, and ask what is deserved, then the case is altered : the learned in the schools may debate questions "for and against," but come to their devotions, and there we find all

¹ Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. i. 9. 27.

² Sufficit ad justitiam solum habere propitium cui soli peccavi.—*Ber. Epist.* cxix.

³ Jerom. in Dial. cont. Pelag.

meriting ascribed only, only unto mercy.⁴ Ask what may be done of others, haply one thing may be answered; but ask in good earnest what they think of themselves, they will tell us of another.⁵

One of the greatest clerks that this age hath had, when he had long discoursed the controversy of justification, and therein left no stone unturned, towards the folding up of all, hath turned these words: "More safe is it to forget the mention of our own merits, and to look only unto the mercy of God⁶:" So when men have wearied themselves in matters of doubt, they find (O holy Christ) it is thy merits that must stand them in stead.

2. To proceed then, and to show as Christ was a sacrifice for sin, so also an example of life, we may consider that the more diligently we trace him in the steps of this his most holy life, the more we show ourselves to become true Christians in believing in him. The chiefest pitch of our perfection is to have some resemblance of his holiness. We are promised to become like unto him in the state of glory⁷;" and what should we but endeavour to have some similitude of him in the state of grace? The Jews said of him, "Art

⁴ Duran. lib. ii. dist. 88. quæst. 4.

⁵ Tho. Adver. Gen. lib. i. c. 44.

⁶ Tutius est oblivisci meritorum et in solam Dei misericordiam respicere.—*Bellar. lib. v. de Inst. c. 1.*

⁷ 1 John iii. 2.

thou greater than our father Abraham?" yes, that he was, by many degrees!¹

3. In former ages, when Almighty God was removed from man in the height of his majesty, he never required at man's hand, that he should imitate or follow him, (for how could a weak creature any way imitate him who was higher than the heavens? as the apostle speaketh.) Then man had only a law, which did bind him to conform his will to God's will, to will and love nothing but that which God willed and required; here might man say, saith one; "Lord, excepting thy law, how might I learn to be humble, poor, and to despise glory, when thou art high, rich, and all glorious?"

This complaint is now stayed: See God in another form, and receive, O man, an example for thee to follow, in these and all other virtues², and receive them too from the God of virtues. Those whom precepts do not so effectually move, we see them sometime induced by example; for example, never any of like efficacy with that which the Son of God himself hath given, of whose life it may be said unto the Church of Christ, Look and do after the first example.³

4. And now to run a little over the whole life of the Son of God: See we every age, every action therein (so far as our capacity is able

¹ John viii. 53.

² Heb. vii. 26.

³ Exod. xxx. 40.

to conceive), we shall find it a school of instruction, a perfect rule of most perfect discipline, nowhere do we behold such a precedent of love, of humility, of patience, and in a word, of all virtues. Where is there true wisdom but in the doctrine of Christ? true fortitude but in the passion of Christ? true clemency but in the mercy of Christ? true humility but in the obedience of Christ? He was made man, and walked in the world as man, that he might teach man to live, as he taught him to believe; before ever he preached in words he preached most effectually in works. O sacred Babe, heaven's bliss, and hell's bane, lying in the manger at Bethlehem, and brought up in a mean hostage at Nazareth, what else did he teach by this than contempt of the world? His exile or banishment into Egypt, his being born in the days of cruel Herod; what do we hence learn, but patient suffering of persecution? By his fasting in the wilderness, austerity of life? by his conflict with the tempter, how to withstand temptation? Behold we his contumelies offered of the Jews, calling him a blasphemer, a friend of publicans, a seducer of the people, what a lesson have we of patience? Let us see his labours and travails in the world, his journeying from city to city, how he teacheth in the day, and is all the night praying; his chastity, whose virgin mother brought forth

chastity itself ; his love, whoever more charitable than he ? in the pangs of death he prayeth for his persecutors : his obedience, was there ever greater ? As an innocent lamb he became, as it is said, obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross : we have a remedy against pride, in that he humbled himself ; against impatience, in that he held his peace ; against envy, in that he suffered himself to be railed on by a malefactor ; against sloth, in that he would be all stretched forth on high upon the cross. Oh ! a high spectacle of admiration, where all might see him.

5. By his nakedness we learn to clothe us ; by his gall and vinegar how to delight us ; by his wounds and piercings how to pamper us. If we speak of the world and worldly things, who less respected them than he ? If we consider the care of heavenly, whoever was more often in prayer and meditation ? If alms, where was there ever such an almsman heard of, that gave his own body and blood to refresh the hungry ? If bountifulness, why Paradise itself was granted unto a sinful suitor at the very first motion. What can a Christian heart desire which is not found with spiritual delight in the life of Christ ? What virtue can he wish, but there he shall see a lively image thereof ?

Christ was the eye that was without mote, the white without stain ; he was the lamb

without spot or blemish. The Prophets show his innocency before he came ; and being come, the Evangelists approve as much ; nay, the chronicles of heathen men are not silent, the Roman¹ register makes report of Jesus, which was called of the nations the Prophet of Truth, a man goodly to behold, having a reverend countenance ; his stature somewhat tall ; his hair after the colour of the ripe hazel nut, from his ears somewhat crisped, parting itself in the midst of the head, and waving with the wind, after the manner of the Nazarites ; his forehead smooth and plain, his face without wrinkle mixed with moderate red, his beard somewhat copious, tender and divided at the chin, his eyes grey, various, and clear. He is in rebuking severe, in instructing loving and amiable, merry with gravity, he sometimes wept, but was never seen to laugh, in talk sober and full of understanding, sparing and modest. Thus as ancient records have laid down we may behold him according to that of the Psalmist, " Goodly to see above all the sons of men." Outwardly his graceful behaviour was such while he walked in the world, that the world itself did behold him with high reverence and admiration as a mirror to

¹ The author has taken this description from a letter said to have been written by Lentulus to the Roman senate, which is considered to be spurious.—ED.

look on ; yet his external feature compared with his inward graces, was far inferior to that hidden excellency.

6. Enoch is commended for piety, Abraham for faith and perseverance, Job for patience, Isaac for meditation, Joseph for chastity, Moses for meekness, Phineas for zeal, Samuel for uprightness, Tobit for mercy, Daniel for prayer and devotion, and last of all, Solomon for wisdom ; Saul was higher than all the men of Israel by the head¹ ; Christ the head of the congregation is above all. The lights of the stars are many, but all are not comparable to the light of the sun. Holy men have a measure of grace, but the Son of Man hath grace without measure. Wherefore take the piety of Enoch, the faith of Abraham, the patience of Job, the meditation of Isaac, the chastity of Joseph, the meekness of Moses, the zeal of Phineas, the uprightness of Samuel, the mercifulness of Tobit, the devotion of Daniel, the wisdom of Solomon, put them all together as a cloud of witnesses, and Christ's example is instead of all² : wherefore he is called "The Holy of Holies"³ ; and "in this sacred place (saith the Apostle) was contained the golden censer, the ark of the Testament, the golden pot that contained

¹ 1 Sam. ix. 2.

² Heb. xii. 1.

³ Dan. ix. 24.

anna, the rod of Aaron, that being dead budded again, the wings of the cherubims overshadowing the mercy-seat.”⁴ So in Christ is contained the ark of the covenant between God and man; with the centre, the acceptance of the prayers of the saints; with the golden pot that contained manna, the blessed Sacrament; with Aaron’s rod that budded again, the hope of the resurrection. The two cherubims that look one to face, the two Testaments both looking on one mercy-seat. Isaiah calleth him “The Prince of Righteousness,”⁵ Haggai “the Desire of the nations,”⁶ Malachi “the Sun of Righteousness,”⁷ the angel “Jesus, who shall save us people from their sins.”⁸

7. “There was none of those beatitudes,” saith St. Austin⁹, “which our Saviour spake in his first sermon upon the mount (Matthew the fifth and first), whereof he was not only a teacher, but also a perfect and full observer of the same.”¹⁰ There he exhorteth to be poor in spirit: Who is poorer than he, who came from being equal with God, far lower than the angels? He exhorted to meekness: Who more meek than he, who was a sheep not opening his mouth before the shearer?

⁴ Heb. ix. 3.

⁶ Hagg. ii. 7.

⁸ Matt. i. 21.

¹⁰ Matt. v. 1.

⁵ Isa. ix. 6, 7.

⁷ Malachi iv. 2.

⁹ Aug. in Sermon in Mont.

He exhorted to mourning : Who hath mourned as he, who in the days of his flesh did offer up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him ? He exhorted to hunger and thirst after righteousness : Who could hunger and thirst more in this respect than he, who gave his life for the righteousness of many ? He exhorted to suffer persecution : Whoever suffered more or with more patience than the Son of God suffered ? Last of all, he taught his disciples to leave all for the love of him, but he first left all for their love, when he left his kingdom and throne in heaven.

8. It is said of Cæsar, that in his greatest attempts he used not that word of authority, "Itē"—"Go you," but after a more loving and sociable manner would ever say unto his soldiers, "Eamus"—"Come, let us go." It is most true in Christ before all other ; he never but led the way before his disciples in all holiness, in all trials and tribulations, in all conflicts which are wont to arise in the life of man. And therefore the Apostle willeth us to run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

9. "And here the wisdom of God," saith St. Austin, "providing a mean for human infirmity, would show unto us an example for the direction of our life even in the person of

man.¹ And because he was the end of the way, he would also become the way itself." "Unless he had been true God," saith Leo, "he could not have brought a remedy to strengthen our faith; unless he had been true man, he could not in himself have given us a plain example of life."²

Now what better example could there have been given? How could our pride be better suppressed than by his humility? our disobedience better lessened than by his meekness? our vanities better expelled than by his labours? our impatience better qualified than by his mildness? "Where have we," saith St. Bernard, "true justice but in his mercy, true fortitude but in his constancy? They only are instructed who follow his doctrine; they only are just, who in him receive remission of their sins." "Christ was made unto us," saith the Apostle, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Wisdom by instructing us, righteousness by absolving us from our sins, sanctification by giving us of his Spirit, redemption by purchasing us life by his death.

"That we should not love gold, (saith St. Austin) Christ taught us to contemn gifts offered; that we should not fear hunger, he

¹ Aug. de Doct. Chris. lib. i. cap. 15.

² Leo. serm. i. de Nativitat. Dom.

fasted ; that we should not distrust nakedness, he forbade his disciples divers change of raiment ; that we should not be dismayed at tribulations, he endured many ; that we should not fear death, he himself first died.”¹

“Before all these things (saith the same father), and for our better instruction in all, as he taught us by his word, so is he our fore-runner by his works, and hath levelled and laid out the way wherein we should walk, which way leadeth unto life.”

By three examples doth he direct us in this way, by his poverty, for he did not seek riches ; by his patience, for he sustained wrong ; by his humility, for he despised all glory and pomp amongst men.

And thus if we follow his steps his way shall be our way, his joys our joys.

10. Neither do his divine actions only serve for the direction of our life, but also minister many things for the better confirmation of our faith. As that his birth was our regeneration, his victory over the tempter our triumph, his labours our peace and quiet, his prayers our intercession, his poverty our riches, his death our life.

That which was wanting in us was supplied in him, “and therefore,” saith an ancient father, “his works are our merits.”² Whatso-

¹ Aug. Ep. iii. ad Julianum.

² Opera sua merita nostra.

ever is written of him in the Gospel, whatsoever he did or said, all tends to our good, that we may see and know in whom we may hope, and of whom we may learn, by those wonderful works and miracles of his, that all power both of things in heaven and earth, was given unto him³; in that he helped all that came unto him in time of distress, that he is a refuge for the afflicted: in that he so often watched, taught the people, did all good works and deeds, how hereby he commends unto us a laborious condition of life.

11. When the prophets spake before of the coming of the Just, they call him a light.⁴ Now the light is to illuminate and enlighten, so did Christ at his appearing in the world as a light, both in regard of his enlightening the darkness of man's understanding, as also in shining⁵ forth for the direction of his life: therefore well did Simeon call him the light of the Gentiles, who was, and is the lamp spoken of in the Revelation⁵, that there giveth light where there is no night, nor need of the candle, or light of the sun; for the Lamb is the light of this most glorious habitation.

"While we have the light, let us believe in the light, that we may be children of the light⁶;" "If we walk in the light (saith

³ Matt. xxviii. 18.

⁴ Isai. ix. 2. Luke xi. 32.

⁵ Rev. xxi. 23.

⁶ John xii. 36.

St. John) as Christ is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.”¹ And to this end would the Apostle St. Paul have the Philippians shine as lights², as “being lightened from the true light which lighteneth every one that cometh into the world.”³ And now should we show forth the virtues of him who hath called us to so high a calling.

12. Why are his actions enrolled for all posterity, that we should only hear them, and not express them? “What availeth it,” saith St. Bernard, “to read only in books, and no more, the holy name of our Saviour?”⁴ He that reading of God would find God, let him haste to live worthy of God. “A man may be known (saith Sirach) by his look, and one that hath understanding may be perceived by the marking of his countenance, yea, a man’s garment, and therefore much more his life, declare what he is.”⁵ It is a good consequent amongst Christians, He is virtuous, just, holy, devout, harmless; therefore a faithful Christian, a true follower of Christ.

13. “We keep (saith Austin) and celebrate the nativities of the old saints, and servants of God, that we may continue the

¹ 1 John i. 7.

² Phil. ii. 15.

³ John i. 9.

⁴ Bern. in Can. 23.

⁵ Ecclus. xix. 27.

remembrance of their virtues, and imitate their memorable actions.”⁶ Should we do this in regard of the virtues of men? Then much more for the remembrance of his holiness, who is far above all men; yea, the best amongst men by infinite degrees. It is said of Themistocles, that by the only example of Miltiades, whom he proposed unto himself to follow, of a vicious man he became very virtuous.⁷ It was not the least praise amongst the Romans, for the younger of best hope to imitate those who were men of special note for wisdom in the commonwealth; whereby an opinion was bred, that they would not prove far unlike those whom they had proposed to imitate. It cannot therefore but prevail much, that Christ should be the centre of our thoughts about which they should roll; the loadstar of our eyes, to which they should be erected; the guide of our journey, the better to accomplish our course.

14. Wherefore generally in all our sayings and doings, we should ever have respect to Jesus: If we speak, to think how he hath spoken; if we are silent, how he was silent; if we do any thing, what he hath done before us; seeing his life instructed our life, who had modesty in his countenance, gravity in his

⁶ Aug. lib. 10. de Civit. et cap. 16.

⁷ Plutarch. in Vit. Themist.

behaviour, deliberation in his speeches, purity in his thoughts, and righteousness in all his doings: his life is the way by which we must walk, the door whereby we must enter, entering at the last unto our desired end, this our end is to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth; and therefore here to follow him, is but to begin to do that in earth for a time, which we shall do hereafter in most joyful manner, with that blessed company of saints and angels for ever above in heaven.

15. The spouse in the Canticles saith, "I am black, but marvel not, the sun hath made me so¹," the sun, but what? the Sun of Righteousness. And how could that be? Yes, his labours and travails in the world, his contempt in the same, his reproaches and suffering, had made him and his spouse look with a sorrowful hue: "He was wounded (saith the prophet) for our transgression, and broken for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him."² What needed he to be circumcised the eighth day? what needed he fast so long in the wilderness, to pray so often as he did, who was so pure, so innocent, so powerful, but all to show it was for our sakes, whom as he redeemed from sin, so hath he also redeemed from the works of sin? And therefore without all question, the more faithful we are

¹ Can. i. 5.

² Isa. liii. 11.

and the more devoted to his love, the more do we apply ourselves to fasting, and prayer, with such other like works of piety, all which our Redeemer himself hath done before us ; that which he applied unto humility, may be in effect applied unto all other virtues, "Learn of me."³ Why is the Holy Ghost so plentiful in laying down all his divine actions, so many, so singular, but that hereupon should be inferred, "These things are written for our example." Now therefore, seeing that God hath given us his Son, let us embrace him as our Saviour, hear him as our teacher, follow him as our leader ; that so he may be unto us (as God himself would have him be unto us), a sacrifice for sin, an example of life : Pharaoh said unto the people, "Go to Joseph, and whatsoever he shall say unto you, do it."⁴

CHAPTER V.

That this example of Christ's life, should stand before the eyes of our mind, for our better direction in all our ways.

THE skilful pilot as he often casts his eye to the stars and planets above, so is his hand as

³ Matt. xi. 29.

⁴ Gen. xii. 55.

busy for the most part at the helm beneath. The Christian man, between contemplation and action, doth the like: By faith he looks up to Christ's deity; by virtuous life he practiseth the virtues of Christ's humanity: in the one, he worships him as God, in the other he beholds him as the most absolute pattern for imitation, that ever walked amongst men.

2. Why! Is it possible for earth and ashes any way to come near him, in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwelt? Sin is never without a shift; and coarse wool is it, that will take no dye. Though we cannot be as strong as Samson, as wise as Solomon, as holy as Enoch, we must not let all alone. When we cannot be as Mary the blessed virgin, let us at the least be as Mary Magdalen; seeing we cannot have a clean heart, let us have at the least a broken heart: though our music be not in the most exquisite form, it is well and commendable to make some harmony. We know there is no water without some mud; no corn so clean but it hath some weeds; the clearest fire hath its smoke; and while we carry about these bodies of sin, we are Adam's children. Notwithstanding it is the part of every good Christian man to say as Jacob, "Let my Lord go before, I will softly follow after, as I may¹:" or as the holy man Job

¹ Gen. xxxiii. 14.

saith, "My foot hath followed his footsteps."² Indeed we follow Christ, as Peter followed him, "Along, afar off³," or as that tender infant did his aged father, With short and unequal paces. Yet we know two mites are acceptable unto him.⁴ Not what we ought, but what we can; when a willing heart and good endeavours concur in his service, who is most ready to reward, and inclinable to take in good part the very intention or well-meaning of our most meanest labours, without exactness, which is in us. A cup of cold water⁵, of water, a common element; cold, on which we bestowed not so much cost as fire to heat it, shall not with him want a reward.⁶ The greatest blemishes in the child are but small warts to the loving father. First, God looks favourably upon Christ, and then upon those who are joined with Christ, and these are those who endeavour themselves to express his virtues, and embrace his merits.

3. Our Saviour used this as an argument to persuade his disciples to love and humility: "I have given you an example⁷:" and St. Peter, speaking of his suffering, saith, "Christ suffered, leaving us an example."⁸ When the Apostle would have the Ephesians to follow him, he tells them his meaning was, they

² Job xxiii. 11.

³ Luke xxii. 54.

⁴ Luke xxi. 2.

⁵ Matt. x. 42.

⁶ Aug. Ser. de Tem. 63.

⁷ John xiii. 15.

⁸ 1 Pet. ii. 21.

should indeed follow Christ: "Be ye," saith he, "followers of me, as I follow Christ¹," when we would have them forgive one another, he would have them think of him, who hath forgiven us all.² St. John lays down the matter plainly, saying, "He that remaineth in him ought to walk as he walked."³ Why did St. Austin say, that every of Christ's actions was our instruction? and St. Ambrose wish that the wise men of the world would be wise indeed, and learn to follow Christ in lowliness of mind; that they would ever set before them his most noble example, who is gone before us into heaven? Therefore Gregory, amongst other high and heavenly ends, "The Son of God (saith he) took the form of our infirmity, bare the scoffs of contumelies, the reproaches of irrision, the torments of suffering, that so God might teach man."⁴ To this Isidore addeth, "Christ ascended unto the cross, died and rose again the third day from the dead, to leave us a double example: of suffering, and rising again: of suffering, to conform our patience, of rising, to confirm our faith."⁵

4. In the eighth of St. Mark, and four-and-

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 1.

² Ephes. iv. 32.

³ 1 John ii. 6.

⁴ Filius Dei formam infirmitatis nostræ suscepit; ad hoc contumeliarum ludibria, illusionum opprobria, passionum tormenta toleravit, ut doceret Deus hominem.—*Greg. Mor.*

⁵ *Isid. lib. 10. ca. 29. de Eccles. Officiis.*

thirtieth, Christ speaketh generally, that the whole multitude might hear, "Whosoever," saith he, "will follow me⁶;" as speaking unto all in general: and in the ninth of St. Luke, and twenty-three, he hath an "If any," as speaking and knocking at the door of every man's heart in particular, "If any will follow me;" "will," and therefore a willing people do follow him: both which show, he looks that we should willingly follow him: and indeed to say truth we had need so to do: for whether we respect comfort of faith, or the best instructions of all for life, we may say with the people of old time: "When we know not what to do: O Son of God, this only is left unto us, to lift up our eyes unto thee."⁷

5. For worldly pleasures, those of the best sort, if they are honest, yet they perish; if otherwise, we perish: only to follow Christ is man's chiefest good. Cyrus, to move the Lacedemonians to follow him, promised unto his soldiers great gifts and preferments; but had he promised his whole kingdom, what had it been, but a transitory, and peradventure a troublesome reward? Christ tells us of sitting and reigning with him in his kingdom, a kingdom of all quiet and continuance. Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal, in the ninth of Judges, goeth to the men of Shechem and

⁶ Mark viii. 34.

⁷ 2 Chron. xx. 12.

thus seeketh to persuade them, "I am of your kindred, of your bone and your flesh¹:" the men of Shechem answered, "Our hearts are moved to follow Abimelech, he is our brother:" we have somewhat more to move us, than these men had, if we remember ourselves well, and therefore may more truly say, "We will follow the Lord Jesus, he is our Saviour."

6. The eagle, to learn her young ones to fly, doth often times flutter over them, all to teach them to raise up themselves by little and little, and so at last to be able to take their flight and be gone.² What do all the precepts and examples of Christ our Saviour, but hover over us, that we should learn to lift up ourselves from earthly affections, and in time ascend whither he ascended, that is, to heaven?

The servant will follow his master, the soldier his captain, the natural child desireth nothing more than to manifest the virtues of his father. "Is he worthy to bear the name of Christ, (saith St. Austin,) who doth no way endeavour the imitation of Christ's actions?"³ In that we believe in him, we acknowledge him our God: in that we do that which Christ did as man, we do that which Christian men should do.

¹ Judg. ix. 1.

² Deut. xxxii. 11.

³ Aug. de Vita Christian.

The Holy Scriptures were not therefore given us, that we should have them in books, or only read or peruse them, and so no more : but the folding up of all is, a pronouncing of them blessed that do his commandments, and keep⁴ the words of these testimonies : Better is it with the Lacedemonians to do well, than with the Athenians to speak well, or only know what belongs to well-doing.

7. Christ hath done his part and conformed himself unto us ; our part remains to conform ourselves unto him : in the way of life whom may we more safely follow, than the way itself ? “Let the same mind be in you, (saith the apostle,) that was in Christ⁵ :” the same, that is, in humbleness of mind a resemblance of the same. Whence is it that we are so soon cast down with every touch of adversity, but that we do not deeply consider Christ’s constancy ? Whence is it that we are so easily carried away with every show of vanity, but in that we lightly pass over Christ’s contempt of the world ? Whence is it that we are so hardly drawn from the love of riches, but that we consider no oftener how Christ’s store was no great substance ? “Who (saith Fulgentius⁶) will not despise his cottage, when he seeth a senator despise his large and spacious buildings ? and who (saith he) contemns not

⁴ Rev. xxii. 9.

⁵ Phil. ii. 5.

⁶ Fulg. de Conv. ad Theod.

earthly things to get heavenly when he sees a consul of Rome do the same? yea, much more, what Christian man in the world will place his whole delight upon a transitory estate, when he sees the Son of God himself pass this life, as only seeking his Father's glory in heaven?"

8. Sure it is, that whereas our lives here are partly guided by precepts and rules, and partly also directed by examples, (and of the two examples avail most,) then have we sufficient instruction in respect of both from the Son of God himself: And for the latter, to wit, examples by which we are led, had we no precept in the world, the only life of our Redeemer were enough for our guide and direction all the way. He that relateth only to others the situation of some great and famous city, cannot make so deep an impression in his hearers' conceit, as he who in presence shows the whole description of the same. So they who only mention, or lay down precepts unto others, do not so lively express them, as he who in his own person (as did the Son of God) doth himself fully perform the same.

9. Now we are not only to behold him in his excellent deeds (for in his divine miracles, and the like, we will admire him as God), but we ought to follow him where himself willet us, and in those things we are able, knowing that he is ready to crown our very desires,

when the performance is above our power. The sick man, takes he benefit of those positions which he seeth? no, which he receiveth and applieth to the recovery of his health.

The actual observation of Christ's precepts and manners, is, for these causes, required at our hands: first, for that they are fruits of our regeneration; secondly, testimonials of our love; thirdly, signs of our profession; and fourthly, effects of our faith.

Our Saviour thus reasoned with the Jews, "If you were the children of Abraham, then would you do the works of Abraham¹:" in effect, if we are Christians indeed, then do we keep the rules and precepts of Christ. In the tenth of St. John he is called a shepherd, and we are resembled unto sheep²; now, although sheep, according to the philosopher, be a cattle given to stray³, "Yet, (saith our Saviour,) they will hear the voice of the shepherd, and follow him too," wherein is contained our Christian duty in following Christ.

10. "Awake, O Christian soul, (saith St. Austin,) awake and imitate the footsteps of thy Lord. He teacheth thee, who is the way, the life, and the truth: the way without erring, the truth without deceiving, the life without fading: the way by example, the

¹ John viii. 39.

² John x. 14.

³ Pecus erraticum.—*Aris. de Nat. Anim.*

truth by promise, the life by reward ; neglect not the following of so gracious a Lord.”¹

It was said unto the foolish virgins that were shut out from the marriage feast, “I know you not² :” what shall they do who never endeavoured to show his virtues, when the time shall come of giving reward ? The voluptuous, to see him in glory, who once lived in fasting and great devotion ? the proud in seeing him exalted, who refused earthly pomp ? the covetous in beholding him Lord of heaven and earth, who never followed the riches of the world, but now to live and reign for ever ? What a strange sight will this be unto them ! how shall they be confounded in themselves, how often will they wish with sighs, that they had walked in his ways ! Dionysius the elder, when he heard of the great folly committed by his son, he calls him unto him, and reasons with him after this manner, “Didst thou ever see me do as thou doest, live as thou livest ?” the same may be said to men who follow their own fancies. Did ye ever see Christ do so and so ?

11. When mariners do want in the main sea marks to direct their course by, they take their mark, which is the surest way, from the heavens : in like manner, if we had not examples (as we have many to this effect),

¹ Aug. de Vita Christ.

² Matt. xxv. 12.

yet the surest mark to direct our ship by, is to look to him whose habitation is in heaven, which will keep us between Scylla and Charybdis all the way unto the port of paradise ; we stand in need of a guide, for how should the blind walk, unless he have a helper to lead him ? the weak and feeble walk, unless he have an assistant to stay him ? the wanderer come into the way, unless he have a conductor to direct him, which is Christ, whom to follow, as whom to know, is life eternal ?³

12. By that vision of John in the Apocalypse, or Book of Revelation, where he saw the four beasts and the four and twenty elders falling down before him who sat upon the throne, and pouring out their vials⁴, is understood the state of Christ, the Head of the Church (saith the learned,) and the duty of his members in following him as they ought by several virtues laid down, in that it is said, they follow him whithersoever he goeth.

First, he is called the Lamb, and therefore they follow him in humility⁵ ; this we see by their falling down.

Secondly, by mortification, for this Lamb was sacrificed ; and they give their bodies a sacrifice to serve him.

Thirdly, they follow him in love : he in love gave himself for the redemption of man, and

³ John xvii. 3.

⁴ Rev. v. 8.

⁵ Rev. xiv. 4.

they have their golden vials pouring out charity unto men.

Fourthly, they follow him in devotion; he often prayed, and they offer and pour out too their sweet odours and prayers unto God. Gideon said unto all his troops and company, "That which you see me do, do ye¹:" Our Gideon says the same unto all believers, "What ye see me do, do ye." They cannot go amiss, whose guide is the way: they cannot err, whose direction is the truth: they cannot perish, whose preserver is life. The prophet Isaiah saith, "This is the way, walk in it."²

If the children of Israel did learn many things of the Egyptians, only because they dwelt amongst them, how much more should the faithful learn of Christ, who is said to dwell with them, and in them?

CHAPTER VI.

The first virtue to be learned in the life of Christ was his humility.

It is said of those who excel in the art of elocution, that they never find less to speak

¹ Judg. vii. 17.

² Isa. xxx. 21.

than when the matter is most copious whereof they should speak. Such is the enumeration of thy virtues, O holy Christ, which the more we consider them, the more we wonder at them ; and the longer we labour how to express them, the less able we find ourselves how to conceive them. In these of all other we stand amazed at thy humility, who being God from everlasting, wouldst take thy passage from the throne of glory, and here arrived in a valley of tears, wouldst exile thyself three-and-thirty years from this thy majesty. And what more ? wouldst be born man.³ And what more ? even as the meanest amongst men. And what more ? wouldst be circumcised according to the law⁴, who wert above all law. And what more ? wouldst sustain reproaches and obloquy in the world. And what more ? wouldst suffer death, yea, a most ignominious death, being the God of life, the Author of life, and life itself. Here St. Austin crieth out, "Whither did thy humility descend?"⁵ If thy own love drew thee to this, it was thy goodness : if our love, it was thy gift.

2. Adam transgressed the law of his Maker ; and not only that, but Adam, and in Adam all his posterity (for we have no sin by

³ Matt. ii. 1.

⁴ Luke ii. 21.

⁵ Quo descendit humilitas ?—*Aug. Med. Sept.*

imputation), not only transgressed the law of his Maker, but wilfully rebelled against the wisdom of his God, which wisdom was God the Son, the second person in Trinity. Adam, thou and all thy offspring (because all are accessary) shall rue this contumacy offered with so great indignity unto the Lord of heaven and earth. What says our Jonas? "For me is this tempest raised, O Father, for me is thy just wrath incensed, let me be cast out into the sea¹: for me hath this ire begun; by me let it have an end²; let me be the Lamb slain, so these Israelites may be delivered. And must that poor posterity of Adam have a return unto their lost country by blood? Let me be the virginal sacrifice. And wilt thou have an offering? Let me be the Isaac that shall go to one of the mountains of Moriah.³ Of the two goats, let me be the scape-goat sent to wander in the wilderness."⁴ O the humility, and love, and bounty of the Son of God!

3. But to leave that which the Apostle saith, "Being equal with God, he became like unto man⁵," and (sin only excepted) was even as one of us; to see a little his estate and condition in the world when he was born, where was the place of his birth, but at Beth-

¹ Jonah i. 12.

² Rev. v. 12.

³ Gen. xxii. 2.

⁴ Lev. xvi. 8.

⁵ Phil. ii. 7.

lehem a little city?⁶ And where did the shepherds find him but in a sorry cottage⁷, whose seat was above the cherubims? When he chose disciples, whom did he choose but poor fishermen?⁸ When he walked up and down, who were his associates but publicans, and for the most part the common people?⁹ When he would take repast, where was his table but the plain ground? What were his dainties but bread and some few fishes?¹⁰ Who were his guests but a company of feeble and hungry creatures? When he would take his rest, where was his lodging but at the stern of a ship?¹¹ And so in all other actions of life he showed himself a pattern of all humility.

4. Thou art deceived, O Jew, that expectest in the promised Messias pomp and glory of the world: look over all the ancient prophecies of him, and thou shalt find it far otherwise. The Psalmist will tell thee that he shall become "a worm and no man." The prophet Isaiah, "Who will believe our report? He is despised and rejected of men, he is a man full of sorrows."¹² Zechariah, "Behold thy King cometh in meek manner"¹³, and so along. "Fear not, Herod, the loss of

⁶ Matt. ii. 1.

⁸ Luke. v. 10.

¹⁰ Matt. xiv. 19.

¹² Isa. liii. 3.

⁷ Luke ii. 16.

⁹ Luke xv. 1.

¹¹ Matt. viii. 24.

¹³ Zech. ix. 9.

thy diadem: This King is born," saith Fulgentius, "not to succeed thee (thou art deceived if thou thus think of him), but he was born that all the world should believe in him."¹ Fear not him to become thy successor; believe in him and he will be thy Saviour. He came not to possess the kingdom of others, but to give the possession of his own kingdom to all believers. He came not by arms to subdue kings, but by dying to give them all a better kingdom for the time to come: he sought not others' glory who so humbly forsook his own: he was hungry, and yet he fed many: he was weary, and yet refresheth all that are heavy laden: he was dumb, and opened not his mouth², and yet was the divine speech of God himself³: he was of mean reputation amongst men, and yet was Lord of heaven and earth.⁴

5. If you ask, When he was? St. John saith, "In the beginning⁵:" if you ask, What he was? he tells us, "The word was God:" if you ask, What he did? he says, "All things were made by him:" if you ask, What he doeth? he showeth that "He enlighteneth all that come unto him:" if you ask, How he came into the world? he setteth it down in

¹ Non ut tibi succedat, sed ut in eum mundus universus credat.—*Fulg. de Epipha.*

² 1 Pet. ii. 23.

⁴ Matt. xxviii. 18.

³ John i. 1.

⁵ John i. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

plain words, "The Word became flesh." If there were no other testimonies to prove his Deity, yet this were sufficient, "Before Abraham was, I am."⁶ To whom all power in heaven and earth is given⁷, this same is God: but this was given unto Christ. If all things were made by him, then was he the Creator, for no creature is the maker of all things.⁸ "O great is the mystery of godliness," saith the Apostle, "He was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory."⁹ Zacharias, when his coming did now approach, was stricken dumb¹⁰; he prophesied: and all the prophecies of old now ceasing, behold him who was the end of them all. Behold him, from his cradle at Bethlehem to his cross at Jerusalem, a mirror of true humility, so great, so mighty as he was, to become¹¹ in mean manner a poor pilgrim amongst men.

6. Where are they that seek, and never cease seeking, (for were not men happy, if they could keep a mean in their music, which would make better harmony both before God and man?) where are they, I say, that never

⁶ John viii. 58.

⁷ Matt. xxviii. 18.

⁸ John i. 2.

⁹ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

¹⁰ Luke i. 22.

¹¹ ["To see too." Ed. 1602.]

leave seeking that mountain-like height or superiority in the world? Let them remember the world itself will have an end. Where is that grace that brings low every hill, and makes plain the roughest passages?¹ Where is our time spent in the school of Christ, since we took upon us in baptism the name of Christians, seeing we remember so little our Master's lesson, "Learn of me to be humble and meek?"² "O Lord (saith St. Austin unto his familiar friend), we profess much knowledge and learning³, (this he spake a little before his conversion,) and yet go on in flesh and blood, looking aloft, and overlooking others: these poor souls (meaning them who lead a humble life) shall carry away heaven from us."

We see the Lord of glory how lowly he was: When his disciples were discoursing and debating the matter of superiority, he bringeth in amongst them a little child, setteth him in the midst of them, saying, "Unless you become as little children, you are not meet for the kingdom of heaven⁴," nay, which is more, himself is down at his apostles' feet, washing and wiping them: What humility was this?⁵ But hence what would he have his

¹ Luke iii. 5.

² Matt. xi. 29.

³ Aug. Con. 8.

⁴ Matt. xviii. 3.

⁵ John xiii. 5.

disciples learn? "Ye call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so am I; if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done unto you."

7. To see him whom the angels do adore, whom the powers and principalities do worship, at whose very name every knee both of things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, do bend and bow⁶, to see him kneeling down upon the earth, and do service at the very feet of his servants, was a sight most admirable. If we ask the cause, himself hath told us, even to teach us this virtue of humility: of which virtue St. Austin thus speaketh, "If you ask what is the first step in the way of truth? I answer, humility: If you ask what is the second? I say, humility: If you ask what is the third? I answer, the same, humility: What evil doth not this virtue salve, what good doth it not assist?"⁷ Is it not as the steps of degree in the Temple, whereby we descend to the knowledge of ourselves, and ascend to the knowledge of God? Would we attain mercy? humility will help us.

The poor publican humbly confessing his sins, and striking his breast, as if his repentance came from his very heart, found mercy.⁸

⁶ Phil. ii. 10.

⁷ August.

⁸ Luke xviii. 13.

The prodigal son humbleth himself in his father's sight, and is received into favour with him.¹ The centurion acknowledgeth himself unworthy of Christ; Christ both cures his servant, and commends his faith.² But of all other examples, the humility of the blessed Virgin (blessed amongst women, to be his mother who was her Maker), an ambassador comes unto her from the King of heaven with a high message, "Hail, full of grace³," how could not the mother of humility (and yet a tender virgin), but with bashful countenance, be told that she was full of grace, and that she was so highly accepted of God? How did modest shamefastness change her colour, so often as her imagination varied; still humbly conceiving of herself? How did she at last acknowledge the goodness of God? with all submission, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, with humble obeisance unto that God, who had respected and regarded (as she saith in her Canticle) "The humbleness of his handmaiden!" Thus we see how much humility pleased God, when it pleased him so much to respect this virtue, when in the fullness of time he sent his Son unto the world, born of a woman.⁴

8. Being born, it was said unto the shep-

¹ Luke xv. 21.

² Matt. viii. 8.

³ Luke i. 28.

⁴ Gal. iv. 4.

herds which were sent to see him, "And let this be a sign to you ; you shall find the child wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger."⁵ And to find Christ a sign unto all Christians, you shall find him in humility ; he betook him to a poor cottage, that he might teach us not to seek him in palaces : he was not born in the house of his parents, but in the way, to show us that his kingdom was not of this world. "And this shall be a sign unto you," you shall find him in humility : he became meek that we might be made strong : poor, that we might be made rich : vile, that we might be made glorious : the Son of man, that we might be made the sons of God. "And this shall be a sign unto you," you shall find the child in humility ; upon whom doth my Spirit rest, but upon the humble ?"⁶ To whom do I look, but unto these ? Where did the dove light ? Not upon the swelling waters, but cropped a branch of olive that had lain below. Humble Moses is made a ruler of God's people⁷ humble Gideon, the least in his family, as himself confessed, was by God made the greatest governor.⁸ When Saul was lowly in his own eyes, God exalted him ; but when Saul forgot God, then when he should

⁵ Luke ii. 12.⁶ Isa. lxvi. 2.⁷ Exod. iii. 10.⁸ Judg. vi. 15.

have remembered him, Saul soon comes to ruin.¹

9. What art thou, O man, that liftest up thyself in pride? Know that pride cannot sit so high, but vengeance can sit above it, to pull it down. "God and pride (saith St. Bernard) cannot dwell in the same mind, which could not dwell in the same heaven; and pride fallen from heaven, ascends no more from whence it is fallen."²

Old records make mention that in Egypt there was found the picture of Senacherib, of whose pride the Scripture maketh mention, having by his picture this inscription: "Learn by me to fear God," as if they would show the cause and overthrow of Senacherib's pride, as thus, Senacherib feared not God. We are wont of all other men, to call proud men fools, and not without cause; for they often exult themselves in their riches, in their honours, in their learning, and what not? Now what more foolish than to please ourselves, to think it a grace to disgrace others, and to love our own conceits? all comes of pride, which is the very root that nourisheth the imps of many vices. Plutarch saith, "that one Chares, a mean fellow, waxed so proud, and began to grow into such admiration of himself, because he had hurt Cyrus in the

¹ 1 Sam. xv. 17.

² Bernar. in Medit.

knee, that in the end through very pride he became stark mad." The church stories make mention of Arrius a priest in the church of Alexandria, "a man of sharp wit; of very pride he fell to open and fearful heresy."

Let it be remembered and written in the tables of our heart, "God resisteth the proud."³

10. The more direct the sun is over us, the lesser is our shadow: the more God's grace is over us, and in us, the lesser is our shadow of pride and self-love. Had we Christian hearts to consider the humility of our Redeemer, and how far he was from our haughty and disdainful dispositions, it would pull down our Pharisaical humours, "I am not as this man⁴;" and make us to remember ourselves, remembering that of the Holy Ghost, "He that stands, let him take heed lest he fall."⁵ The soul is said to have senses in some manner as the body hath: Instead of seeing, it hath faith; instead of hearing, obedience; of smelling, hope; of tasting, charity; and last of all, instead of touching, humility: a sense of all other is this touching most necessary, for this failing, life faileth. The mole is said to live without seeing, the fly without hearing, the cameleon without tasting, the shell-fish without smelling, but without feeling nothing sensitive existeth. The same may be

³ Jam. iv. 6.

⁴ Luke xviii. 11.

⁵ 1 Cor. x. 12.

considered of the grace of humility, in the life of grace.

11. The mother of Zebedee's children comes unto our Saviour, as a suitor for her sons, that they might have superiority and sit next him in his kingdom¹: she as yet not fully illuminated, thought, that Christ should bear a state in the world, and sit as a king in princely authority, and therefore she thought to take her time, and lay for promotion, that her sons might be great about him, and bear some sway as no mean states; but all this while she was far wide. Christ, as he never affected superiority in himself, so did he teach, that those who were greatest should be as the least, and the chiefest as he that served. He came not into this world to have any high pre-eminence, in regard of worldly dignity amongst men; but in lowliness of mind from his first entrance, until his departure unto his Father, was the whole carriage of his life; whereunto his doctrine accorded, when he pronounced them blessed, who were poor in spirit²: his reprehension accorded, when he disliked their manner who were wont to thrust and strive for the highest places at feasts and other assemblies.³ He that contented himself with so mean and lowly a condition, was able with one word to have showed as

¹ Matt. xx. 21.

² Matt. v. 3.

³ Luke xiv. 7.

much state, as ever Solomon did when all the world in a manner did admire him.

12. Wherefore, if we follow our heavenly leader, then must we humble ourselves; more safe is it to be upon the pavement, where we may walk surely, than to be climbing upon the pinnacles of the Temple, where and whence we may take a fall. Peter in humility and fear craveth distance from Christ, "Lord, go from me, for I am a sinful man:" Esther, that good woman, made a good protestation in her prayer, "God, thou knowest I detest the sign of pride."⁴ "Lord (saith David), I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks⁵:" The Spartans, heathen men, were honoured in the world for their great humility and obedience. The counsel of the angel unto Agar may be counsel befitting man's insolency, "O Agar, go, humble thyself." It is a temptation of Satan (saith Macarius), "Thou art better than other, wiser than other, worthier than other," hearken not unto it.⁶

13. When as Rebecca understood it was Isaac which came walking upon the ground, down she comes from her camel and covereth herself with a veil⁷: she thought it unseemly, herself to be on high, and see her spouse content to go on foot below. When we consider with ourselves how our Lord and master was

⁴ Esther xiv. 15. [Apoc.]

⁶ Maca. Hom.

⁵ Ps. cxxxi. 1.

⁷ Gen. xxxiv. 65.

so lowly and meek, what should we else do, but be ashamed of our own conceits, and come down from lofty and swelling desires, remembering that of St. James, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and he will exalt you¹;" or, that of Solomon, "Humility goeth before honour²;" or, if all this will not serve, to learn us to be humble and meek, yet let the fall of Lucifer be a warning unto all, while they have a day to live, to take heed of pride.

CHAPTER VII.

What we learn by Christ's leading into the wilderness, his fasting, and temptation there.

It cannot but add courage and comfort unto the soldier, when he seeth his captain in the forefront of the battle to encounter and foil the enemy: Who is not animated in mind when he hears of Christ's conflict and conquest, with and against the professed enemy of us all? Men are wont to read with delight, and mark with attention, the magnanimity of great champions showed in assaulting their

¹ Jam. iv. 10.

² Prov. xv. 33.

enemies in war ; how they have gone forth in the day of battle, and acquitted themselves like men, for the saving of their lives and liberties. But what combat more joyful unto the Christian man, than this of our Saviour, who undertook hand to hand that great Goliath³ which did upbraid the God of Israel, and the host of Israel ; and not only undertook him, but so quelled and subdued his force, as all his whole army are emboldened to march on, and take arms against him, in his assistance who once overcame the red dragon, and so to triumph over the common adversary of their souls !

2. For the better observation hereof we are to consider four things ; first, Christ's baptism ; secondly, his departure into the wilderness ; thirdly, his fasting ; fourthly, his conflict and conquest over the tempter there, who at this time (saith the text) came unto him. In the first, we call to mind our regeneration in the fountain of grace ; in the second, our departure from the vanities of the world ; in the third, the mortification of the flesh ; in the fourth, our conquest over the tempter and temptation. If we respect our regeneration in the fountain of grace, we look upward, and see heaven opening, and hear a voice testifying of every one, " This is my be-

³ Sam. xvii. 10.

loved son.”¹ If we respect the second, (our departure from the vanities of the world,) we hear that of our Saviour, “I have chosen you out of the world.”² If the third, that of the apostle, “Take no thought for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of it.”³ If we respect the fourth, that of St. John in the Revelation, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.”⁴ “Be sober and watch, (saith St. Peter,) for your adversary the devil as a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, stedfast in the faith.”⁵ Why doth the shepherd watch, but because the wolf watcheth?

3. And here, before we enter into consideration of this our Saviour’s departure into the wilderness, we may call to mind how before his preaching the Gospel or glad tidings of salvation unto the world, he first prepared himself by fasting: He being thus prepared, himself in person goeth out against the enemy. Now as the ark of God went before the people in the wilderness, not only to show them the way, but also to strike a fear and terror into the hearts of their enemies⁶; the same hath Christ done for us all, having entered our names into his family, we have the title and testimony to be his; having this title

¹ Matt. iii. 17.

² Rom. xiii. 14.

³ 1 Pet. v. 8.

⁴ John xv. 19.

⁵ Rev. xii. 11.

⁶ Exod. xiii. 21.

and testimony, we are led by his Spirit : being led by his Spirit, we leave the world ; leaving the world, we fall to fasting and other exercises of piety ; in these exercises of piety, the tempter will assay us ; the tempter assaying us looking unto Christ our captain, he shall not prevail against us.

4. For Christ's fasting, we see thereby how to arm ourselves against the adversary, that the flesh may be obedient unto the soul, the soul unto grace ; and so to say as David, " I come forth unto thee in the name of my God."⁷ This fasting doth much help the soul, which is the chief agent in this battle, that soul and body, both together, may withstand the force of the enemy. When two are combating, if one step in to assist either party, the party assisted is likeliest to prevail. Fasting helps the soul ; Christ fasteth, and is strengthened against the force of the tempter. Physicians can tell us, than fasting there is nothing better for the body : and divines can show us, than fasting nothing better for the soul ; in which it is not the worst course, to weaken the enemy before we combat with him : the flesh also is an enemy. For this holy exercise of fasting, it beseems no man more than Christians ; first, because they are men, (not brute beasts, led by sensuality,) and

⁷ 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

therefore those whom temperance should guide; secondarily, that they are men who are to live, not according to the flesh, but according unto the Spirit¹, and therefore are not to lead their lives as Epicures; nor stuff themselves like woolpacks: "Let us eat and drink, to-morrow we shall die."² Thirdly, for that they are men now in the field, and besieged daily with a hateful adversary; and therefore should be sober, watching unto prayer.³

5. Christ fasted forty days, and was armed against the tempter. Christ fasted forty days and forty nights, whence we may gather that we must be armed against this enemy, as well in the days of prosperity as nights of adversity. He fasted truly, giving us an example against temptation: "and for this cause," saith St. Basil, "is fasting necessary for our spiritual combat."⁴ Who overcame the host of the Assyrians? Fasting Judith.⁵ Who mitigated the wrath ready to come upon a great city? Fasting Ninevites.⁶ Who prevailed for the preservation of the people? Fasting Moses.⁷ Who stayed the intended destruction of many innocents, but fasting Esther?⁸ That thou mayest learn, O man, how neces-

¹ Rom. viii. 1.

² 1 Pet. v. 8.

³ Judith ix. 1.

⁷ Exod. xvii. 11.

² 1 Cor. xv. 32.

⁴ Basil, de Laud. Jeju.

⁶ Jon. iii. 6.

⁸ Esther xiv. 2. [Apoc.]

sary a thing fasting is against the enemies bodily and ghostly, against the temptations of the devil, and that after fasting thou shouldest not intend to delicacies and full tables, see Christ our Saviour, after his baptism, led of the Spirit into the wilderness, where he fasted.⁹ He which brought ruin unto the state of man began the same by eating¹⁰: but he that brought recovery unto the ruined state of Adam, began the same by fasting. He in whom we all fell did fall by yielding to temptation: but he in whom we all rose, and being risen are still preserved from falling, did raise us up by vanquishing the tempter and temptation.

6. When one cureth a sick man, he commands him not to do again in any case the things that procured his sickness: Christ hath wrought our cure, and prescribes us a diet, "Take heed that your hearts be not overcome with surfeiting¹¹," and shows us what is hurtful to our health.

The sins of Sodom, amongst other, were these, pride and fulness of bread, which fulness was the very fuel of foul iniquity which followed.¹² We must be either Ninevites or people of Sodom: Ninevites, and so those that fasted and prayed that God would have mercy

⁹ Matt. iv. 2.

¹¹ Luke xxi. 34.

¹⁰ Gen. iii. 6.

¹² Ezek. xvi. 49.

upon them for their sins : people of Sodom, and so those that lived in all voluptuousness, and were consequently consumed in their sins. The more abstinent at the table, the more continent in the chamber. Moses that was fasting, saw God above in the mount¹ : the people that were eating and drinking, committed idolatry beneath in the valley.² As fasting is a most excellent mean of sharpening our devotion to God : so on the contrary, satiety and fulnesss doth often cause us to forget him. "They were filled (saith the Prophet Hosea) as in their pastures, and their hearts were exalted, therefore have they forgotten me."³ "Those (saith St. Austin) who are given to excess, they do not so much consume as they are consumed, for in the end they become senseless."⁴ But on the other side for fasting and austerity of life, how commendable it is, we see in Christ's testimony of John the Baptist, when he said, "There was not any born of a woman greater than John."⁵

"They who are Christ's have crucified the flesh," (saith the Apostle,) and this crucifying is for the soul's safety.⁶ The champion loves his buckler well, and yet for all that, he cares

¹ Exod. xxxii. 2.

² Hos. xiii. 6.

³ Matt. xi. 11.

⁴ Deut. ix. 16.

⁵ Aug. de Pœnit.

⁶ Gal. v. 24.

not how it be hacked and hewed, so his body be defended. It is no matter for chastising the outward man, so the man within thee be kept safe and sound.

7. Nourish the flesh and nourish the vices of the flesh; nourish or pamper the flesh, and give thy very enemy weapon to hurt thee. What more seemly than a temperate man? What more unseemly than the man intemperate? Is he not compared unto the brute beasts, the wolf, the bear, and such like? "There is not (saith Solomon) any great hope in him that loveth banqueting." But how abstinence is a mean to bring us to all virtues, it appeareth in those three children, who being content with pulse and water, increased in wisdom and understanding above all the delicious wantons that were in Babylon.

8. A singular example may be seen in Christ's fasting. "For necessary instruction," saith one, "Christ would not only teach us in words, but in example."⁷ What a goodly Christian art thou which disdainest fasting, and seest how the Son of God endured such hunger for thy salvation? Should that flesh fast that knew not how to rebel against the Spirit? and should not thine, that knoweth to

⁷ Ut rem utilem, non solum verbis, sed etiam exemplis instrueret.

do nothing else? But thou wilt say, "Christ fasted forty days and forty nights: therefore should I endeavour to fast so long? A thing impossible! Why, nothing that goeth into the man defileth the man!" What logic call they this, which is a reasoning without reason? Surely this arguing comes then of carnal security. Though we fast not as Christ fasted, should we do nothing at all? Though no meats are unclean of themselves, is there therefore no order to be observed in our Christian fasting? Is this fasting a matter only of policy, or, in our hardest censure, a superstitious rite? which serveth to show our sorrow, in the first place for sins past; secondarily, our fear of punishment for to come; which serveth in the third place for the castigation of the body; and in the fourth, for the humiliation of the soul? If we respect the first of these ends, so did the people fast.¹ If the second, so did the men of Nineveh fast.² If the third, so did the Apostle.³ If the last, so did the Prophet fast, saying, "I have humbled my soul with fasting."⁴

9. Can the world better gratify the old enemy of man than to take away this, which Tertullian calleth "A work of reverence to

¹ Judg. xx. 26.

² 1 Cor. ix. 27.

³ Jon. iii. 6.

⁴ Ps. xxxv. 13.

God⁵," whereby we prostrate our souls and bodies before him, and dispose ourselves the better to devotion, when we fall to fasting? Should we so lightly (besides those many precepts and examples in holy scriptures) pass over this one example of our Saviour's fasting, which being duly considered doth minister much matter worthy of our Christian observation?

Fitly is the number of forty days mentioned in Christ's fasting: "Because the number of forty days," saith St. Jerome, "is oftentimes in holy scripture applied unto a time of penitence and affliction for our sins."⁶ Forty days continued the waters of the flood⁷: Forty years wandered the people in the wilderness⁸: Forty days had the Ninevites to repent them of their sins⁹: Forty days slept Ezekiel upon his right side¹⁰, sorrowing for the tribe of Judah: Forty days fasted Elias when he fled before Jezebel¹¹: Forty days fasted Moses when he received the law upon the mount¹²: Moses for the Law, Elias for the Prophets, Christ for the Gospel, who appeared together at the transfiguration¹³, three sufficient witnesses to authorize fasting and the number of forty days' fasting, which

⁵ Tertul. de Laud. Jeju. ⁶ Hiero. in Ezek. ⁷ Gen. vii. 4.

⁸ Ps. xcv. 10.

⁹ Jon. iii. 1.

¹⁰ Ezek. iv. 6.

¹¹ 1 Kings xix. 8.

¹² Exod. xxiv. 18.

¹³ Matt. xvii. 3.

time (saith St. Jerome) the Church hath kept since the time of the apostles themselves.¹

And now come we unto the conflict itself: The tempter saith, "If thou be the Son of God," as yet doubtful of his Deity. When he heard that a virgin had conceived and borne a son², then he thought he was the Son of God; but when he perceived she was espoused to Joseph, then he thought he was the Son of man: When he heard the angels make that heavenly melody at his birth, then he thought he was the Son of God³; but when he saw the tender babe in Bethlehem, with Mary his mother, laid in a manger, then he thought he was the Son of man: When he saw him circumcised⁴, then he thought there appeared a plain sign of his humanity; but when he heard the name of Jesus, then he began to suspect his Deity: When he saw him baptized with the multitude⁵, he thought sure he was the Son of man; but when the voice came from heaven, then he heard otherwise that he was the Son of God: When he saw him fasting so long, and not hungering, then he thought he was the Son of God; but when at

¹ Hier. con. Mont. Nos secundum Traditionem Apostolorum unicum observamus Quadragesimam.

² Matt. i. 20. 23.

³ Luke ii. 14. 16.

⁴ Luke ii. 21.

⁵ Matt. iii. 16, 17.

the end of forty days he hungered, then he thought he was the Son of man. And therefore in the first place, he assays him by eating, as man, with a conditional "If," to have him show his power, whether he were or no the Son of God.

But our Saviour when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, proceeded no farther, that the power of his Deity as yet might be hid, seeing that Moses and Elias, men, had aforetime fasted so long. Forty days without hunger was not of man, and yet afterward to hunger was not of God, and therefore the devil, as doubtful what to do, tempted him after this manner, If thou art the Son of God, that natural Son of God, and so equal to him in power, (and so as one that hath authority,) command that these stones be made bread, and so fall to eating. There is a voice that hath testified of thee from heaven that thou art the Son of God, canst thou live by this title or testimony? thy Father either sees not thy distress, or will not help thy necessity: The best way is, help thyself, and look thou to thine own safety: while the voice is testifying, thou art starving.

11. In this or the like temptation, great is the subtilty of the old serpent, wherein first, he moves to distrust God's providence; secondly, to trust in our own power; and, thirdly, to neglect fasting and meditation, the exercises

of true piety. "Command that these stones may be made bread;" as if, "Now shall I see, whether he be the Son of God or no: if he turn these stones into bread, assuredly he is the Son of God; if not, it shall appear he is the Son of man." Whereby, he would at once, both try him, whether he were God, as also allure him as man; but the tempter meeting with Christ, met with his match, for he could not by his most divine answer gather the certainty of either: "Man (saith he) shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God¹:" meaning the order, that God hath ordained to maintain his creatures by, or his word, the sustenance of the better part of man, namely, the soul.

12. Doth the tempter thus leave? no, he assays him again, This man fasteth, liveth devoutly in the wilderness, is not carried away with temptation of eating, surely he is good, and better than others, may he not be brought to affect glory of the world? this affectation of glory is wont to move the best. Now the tempter taketh him to the pinnacle of the temple, setteth him on high: unto the temple, a show of holiness; on high, a place of eminence: a hundred to one, (thinks he) if a show of holiness, if a place of dignity be not

¹ Deut. viii. 3.

means to tempt: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down;" being the Son of God, thou canst by thy power save thyself, if not, thou hast the ministry of angels to save thee. The Scripture itself saith it, and therefore doubt not to throw thyself down: "He shall give his angels charge over thee²:" casting thyself down and the angels saving thee, all the world will give thee applause, and thou shalt be so glorious as never was any. We see the drift of this temptation when intemperance doth not take place, when a mean estate beneath doth not make men hearken unto temptation, yet to be aloft, the tempter thinks it a fitter opportunity. But what doth he say: "I will cast thee down?" no, but "Cast thyself down:" to show that he can hurt none, unless any by consenting to temptation, hurt himself, for he that desireth that all might fall, can persuade, but not cast down; His property it is to suggest, but our duty to resist his suggestions: a diabolical voice truly is it which provoketh to descend, not to ascend; the tempter saith in desperate manner, "Throw thyself down;" but God saith in hope of mercy, "Raise thyself up."

13. In that he allegeth Scripture, or rather, misallegeth holy writ, it teacheth us with the men of Berea³, to try whether it be

² Ps. xci. 11.

³ Acts xvii. 11.

so or no. We see it hath been the manner of deceivers, following the old deceiver, to forge evidence, and "sometimes (saith Origen) show themselves like subtil pirates, who set up lights near dangerous rocks, that the traveller repairing thither, thinking by the lights all is safe, is so betrayed and taken of his enemies after." In this fashion perverse men, to strengthen their fancies, use also to deal.

But consider we a little the place of Scripture here alleged, taken out of the ninety and one Psalm, all which psalm, say the ancient fathers, concerneth God's protection over faithful man, over whom he hath appointed the ministry of angels. Now Christ who was God from everlasting, rather keeps the angels, than the angels him, and therefore no way was it applicable unto him. "They shall keep thee;" that is to say, thyself O man which art frail and weak, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone: so in the first place the text is not rightly understood, if we respect the state of the righteous man, as the prophet meaneth: yet here is a contrary sense, "He shall keep thee in all thy ways;" true, but not in all thy presumptions; "He shall give his angels charge over thee;" well, shalt thou therefore tempt God, the Lord of angels? Christ answered rather, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." *In the third verse of the same psalm it is*

said, "He shall defend thee from the snare of the hunter;" and in the thirteenth verse, "Thou shalt go upon the lion and adder;" both which places concern our preservation and resistance from the tempter, which he leaveth out, and only inserteth a sentence, which Christ soon answereth by Scripture most rightly alleged, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."¹

14. Hath the devil yet done tempting? no, he taketh our blessed Saviour into an exceeding high mountain, and there showeth him the kingdoms of the world, with the glory of them at once, making a large promise to bestow them all, who had not authority to dispose of any one; he will give kingdoms but upon such a condition as should make any good dealer break off from coping with so bad a bargainer. The condition is, he must be worshipped. What! should man forsake the worship of God, for riches or kingdoms themselves? these were dear riches and kingdoms indeed: "No, (saith Balaam), I cannot do it if he would give me a house full of silver and gold."²

15. Hitherto hath our Saviour showed no sign of his Deity; the tempter takes him to be man, and therefore tempts him as man: in the desert where is hunger, he tempts him to gluttony: upon the temple where was the

¹ Deut. vi. 16.

² Numb. xxii. 18.

chair of doctors, he tempts him to vain glory : upon the high mountain, whence worldly things are seen, he tempts him to covetousness, which is indeed, as the apostle saith, idolatry, for in the possession thereof the tempter requireth worship. But all in vain doth he show Christ the glory of the world, who beheld it no otherwise than physicians are wont to do ulcers and diseases of their patients : he offereth earthly kingdoms, to him who had in his own hands to bestow heavenly : he would have worship of him, whom all the angels do worship, and at whose very sight himself did tremble. And here is to be noted, that by this temptation upon the mountain, thou mayest learn, that when thou art great and high, the devil setteth before thee great and high desires, and would have thee fall down, that thou mayest accomplish them. "This Ambition (saith St. Ambrose) hath a domestic danger ; that it may rule, it serves : that it may be honoured, it bends and bows in giving honour ; while it would be above others, it becomes inferior to others."¹

16. Let men know that all rightful power and pre-eminence is from God, and that all ambitious power is of the tempter. In this temptation consider we Christ's answer unto

¹ Ambitio domesticum malum, et ut dominetur aliis prius servit ; curvatur obsequio, ut honore donetur ; et dum vult esse sublimior, fit remissior.—*St. Ambrose.*

the tempter, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."² And this answer Christ giveth him with authority, commanding him to depart; at which commandment the tempter leaveth him, finding himself every way confounded, and that his combat with Christ was an unequal struggle; he was not able to stand in this champion's hands.

Now concerning this last assault, we may call to mind how quickly our Saviour rejects him, when once he begins to mention God's worship, whereby we are taught to bear injuries offered to ourselves, but no ways to tolerate injury offered unto God. For the other temptation, saith St. Chrysostom, "Cast thyself down³," Christ being not so much moved, did not rebuke the tempter; but when he began to meddle with God's worship, and speak of casting that away upon worldly glory, Christ sends him packing, with, "Avoid Satan," and tells him, that worship was God's only, and none but God's. The conflict ended, the angels come and minister unto him.

17. Against the temptation of intemperance, we have, by the example of Christ, to learn these things, first, not so much to respect the life of the body, as the life of the soul; for should we regard the house, and let the

² Deut. x. 20.

³ Chrysost. hom. in Matt. iv.

householder pine away in misery? Should the servant be adorned, and the master himself become an abject? Secondly, we learn, not to yield unto any persuasion of the tempter, for necessities of a frail, momentary, and transitory life. Thirdly, that a man doth not live by bread only, but by God's sanctifying his creature by his word. Fourthly, that for the want of bodily sustenance we should not break out into impatience, but depend upon God's providence, and use the order that God hath ordained to maintain his creatures.

18. Against the temptation of vain glory, we learn not to believe the embracings of this deceitful Joab, who when he knows any one to be given to fasting, or any other exercises of Christian piety, he would make him as the boasting Pharisee, to say with contempt, "I am not as yonder publican." We see how the tempter when he hath men on high, there moves them to tempt God by presumption, and seek a little glory amongst men by submission; but we see also in this cause what to do: I am a man, and therefore can otherwise descend, than by casting down myself: I will not tempt God and neglect the means he hath ordained for my perservation; for a little glory, I respect it not.

19. Against the temptation of desiring the greatest things in the world, I learn to prefer

God's worship before all, and so to break off by his good grace from evil motions of the fiend. Against all temptations in general, I learn by this of our Saviour to resist temptations when they come. St. Basil likeneth the tempter unto the leopard, which hath such a natural hatred against man, that if he see but man's picture, he is ready to fly upon it, and all to tear it.¹ Such is the enmity of the red dragon whom Christ vanquished, if he see but a picture or resemblance of Christ in a good man, he is ready to rage against it; we see him assaulting, but not prevailing.

20. By the order of these temptations it is manifest, that the tempter first beginneth with lighter, then cometh to greater. First he began with eating, then he goeth to the affectation of glory, and last of all falleth to flat idolatry: in all these Christ meeteth with the temptation in the beginning, kills the serpent in the egg, nips vice in the blade, strangles sin in the first motion. "For the old serpent," saith Jerome, "is slippery, and unless we keep out the head of suggestion, he will get in his body of consent, and at last, tail and all, and so a habit and habitation of abode."

21. In all the temptations Christ repaireth to some testimonies of Holy Scripture, a spe-

¹ Basil in aliquot Script. loc. hom. 21.

cial lesson for our Christian learning: if we are tempted with a desire of sinful delights, we may call to mind we have an "It is written" to answer this temptation: "Not in chambering and wantonness¹:" And if we be tempted with an inordinate desire of riches, we have an "It is written," "Godliness is great gain, if a man be content with that he hath."² If we be tempted with a vain opinion of ourselves, we have an "It is written," "Behold, I am but earth and ashes!"³ If we be tempted with a carelessness of our estate and condition, we have an "It is written," "It is appointed for all men once to die, and after that comes judgment."⁴ Furthermore, we see Christ would not turn stones into bread, to learn us not to consent unto the tempter in any thing, no, though it have a show of good. There were many high places in Jerusalem, yet the temptation of the casting down was from the Temple, the best, the holiest estate of all.

Christ would not cast himself down, though he might have saved himself without the ministry of angels: to show us not to seek supernatural means when God doth lend us natural. We tempt him when we seek health without a medicine, or victory without a

¹ Rom. xiii. 13.

³ Gen. xviii. 27.

² 1 Tim. vi. 6.

⁴ Heb. ix. 27.

combat: we tempt him when we may by reason or counsel avoid some evil, and will notwithstanding explore his power: and last of all we tempt him when we inquire too far into his wisdom, or require that of him unlawfully, which he is wont to offer by means.

22. Christ would not hearken unto the temptation of windy praise, whereby the tempter seeks to draw many from God, and godliness; nor unto a desire of having kingdoms of the world, whereby he is wont to draw many for a great deal less, and needs not be at cost to offer so much to withdraw them from God's worship. What Christ did, we see; and hence all may learn what they should do.

23. At the end of the conflict of our Saviour, the angels come unto him: at the end, "For so long (saith St. Chrysostom) as he was combating, he suffered them not to appear, nor to come near him, lest he might have seemed to put the adversary to flight by the help of angels." At this time the angels minister unto him, as applicable to his Deity: in his agony they are said to comfort him, as having reference to his humanity.

Another thing we here learn is, that the angels do congratulate at the resisting the temptations of the devil. We see we have a great adversary, but a greater Captain to stand with us in the combat. The adversary doth assail the children of God by many

means; in that which is good, by pride; in that which is evil, by abject fear: for the meek, he is over them: for the stout and wilful by persuading good for evil, he is under them: he hath nets for every disposition. For the ambitious he hath glory; for the covetous, gain; yea, for the most religious themselves he hath some mean or other to assail them.

24. "I would you should know (saith St. Bernard) that no man whilst he liveth in this body, can live without temptation. Satan sleepeth not, but is busy to tempt, and specially when thou art in the desert of contemplation, and even carried by the Spirit of God in the wilderness, that is, from the delights and pleasures of this world." But we may be of good courage, our Joshua goeth in and out before us: he was tempted, that we might not think much to endure temptation: he overcame temptation, that in him we might have power likewise to overcome. The tempter came unto him, not once or twice, but the third time, to show that our temptations were many: but how many soever they are, we have these comforts, which are more and of more efficacy: first, that Christ hath subdued the force of our enemy; secondly, that he taketh compassion upon the tempted, having himself endured temptation; thirdly, that from henceforth he will overcome in his

members him whom he overcame in his own person, being the head of the body. "Wherefore," as Moses said unto the people, "dread not, nor be afraid, for your God fighteth for you¹," so may it be said unto every Christian man, whose armour is the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit; whose battle is temptation; whose grand Captain is Christ Jesus our Saviour; whose conquest is an immortal crown of everlasting glory: Be of good courage, pluck up a good heart, the Lord of heaven and earth is with thee and for thee in the conflict. The conclusion is, Christ's fasting ought to be unto us an example of sobriety, while we are in the wilderness: his resisting the tempter an instruction against temptations.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Christ's great compassion towards men, his continual doing good in the world, and what instructions we hence learn.

WHEN we enter into consideration of the great compassion of the Son of God towards the distressed state of man, we find it a work

¹ Deut. i. 30.

of unspeakable mercy. In the creation, O man, God gave thee thyself¹; but in the redemption, God gave thee himself.² In the creation of all things necessary for man, only six days were passed: but in man's redemption three-and-thirty years were fully expired. Adam in the state of innocency, for perfection left all his posterity far behind him: his reason was uncorrupt, his understanding pure, his will obedient: he was for knowledge of heavenly matters an excellent divine, for the nature of things a deep philosopher. Adam had nothing which was necessary now wanting unto him, that when he saw he had all things which he might desire in earth, he might then turn all his desires towards his God in heaven. He hath one precept to keep amongst these many blessings, this one precept is most undutifully broken. Adam! unless mercy step in, thy felicity and the felicity of all thy posterity is at an end. Behold a help when thou art now in the paws of the lion, "The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head." Hear how the serpent's hope is turned into a curse, and in Christ (who was to come), Adam's dread is turned into a blessing. Behold love, which affecteth thee more than thou didst affect thyself.

¹ Dedit te tibi.² Dedit se tibi.

2. Now Christ the promised seed being come, showeth the full accomplishment of the same, in that he compareth himself unto the Samaritan³, who took compassion upon the man that was wounded, bound up his wounds, poured in wine and oil, set him upon his own beast, brought him to a common inn, took out twopence, bade the host have care of him, and shows that at his coming he will make amends for all. This wounded man may resemble human nature: the Priest and the Levite that passed by, leaving him half dead, all the offerings of the ceremonial law: the Samaritan, Christ, who beholding man in this case with the eye of mercy, bound up his wounds with the hand of pity, poured in the softening oil of hope and searching wine of contrition, layeth him upon his own nature, and righteousness thereof, taketh out the two Testaments, bringeth him to the holy hostel of his Church, commandeth his priests to take care and charge of him, and promiseth that one day they shall find they have not lost their labour.

3. "In consideration of man's fall (saith St. Bernard), Mercy began to knock at the bowels of God the Father, which Mercy brought with her Peace as a companion⁴: on the other side, Truth accompanied with Justice

³ Luke x. 33.

⁴ Bern in Ps. Beat.

began to approach and contradict Mercy. Between these sisters began a long controversy: Mercy saith unto God, 'O God, man, this creature of thine, would have compassion showed him, being now so miserable.' 'No,' saith Truth and Justice, 'Lord, fulfil thy word: Adam, that day thou eatest thou shalt die.'¹ Mercy replies, 'But thou hast made me, Mercy; but if thou show no mercy, I am not:' on the contrary, Truth saith, 'And I am Truth, and unless I take place, I abide not for ever.' God the Father commits the deciding of all unto God the Son, before whom Truth and Mercy speak the same things. Truth saith: 'If Adam perish not, I perish:' and Mercy saith, 'If Adam be not conserved, I languish.' Well, let death be good, and let both have what they desire; let Adam die, and yet for all that, let Adam have mercy. O admirable wisdom! but how can death be good, seeing the death of sinners is worst of all, but of the saints precious², and the birth-day of life? To make an end of all this debate, let one be found which of love may die, and yet is not subject to death. The notion seemed good, but where may any such be found? Truth seeks about the earth, and cannot find one clean from sin, no, not an infant of one day; Mercy

¹ Gen. iii. 3.² Ps. cxvi. 15.

goeth up to heaven, and there finds none that hath this love, as to leave life for sinners; these sisters return at the time appointed, not finding that which was required. At the last, Peace calling them aside, and comforting them, saith: 'You know there is none that doeth good, no, not one³; he that gave you this counsel, when all is done, must surely give you help.' Whereat the umpire began to proceed, and calling the angel Gabriel, said, "Go tell the daughter of Sion, Behold, her King cometh⁴: let these sisters now accord in one, and let that of the prophet be confirmed, Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other⁵: now, Truth, thou shalt have thy right, for Adam shall die; and Mercy, here is thy desire, Adam shall be restored to life.'" O happy harmony, who ever read of such wisdom and love, of such bounty and plentiful redemption, where mercy is the wine that gladdeth man's heart, and love is the oil that makes him have a cheerful countenance! Martha said, Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick; as if the love of Christ were enough to move him to take pity. Thus much of Christ's compassion towards the state of man in general.

³ Ps. xiv. 3.⁴ Matt. xxi. 5.⁵ Ps. lxxxv. 10.

4. For his continual doing good in the world,—his mercy was ever pardoning, his wisdom was ever teaching, his liberality was ever giving, his pity was ever helping; how was he evermore the Physician of the sick? What was all his teaching, or whereunto did it tend, but unto the remission of sins? For his sincerity of life while he walked in the world, Tertullian¹ bids the Romans but read their own registers; there they should find mention of the faultless conversation of Jesus the son of the Virgin Mary. His doing good fully appeared to poor sinners all along. Look what was due to his obedience, love: to his deserts, reward: to his humility, honour: to his sorrow, joy: to his death, life: to his victory, triumph: all is attributed unto them: his merits became their merits, his suffering their satisfaction, his joys their joys. He fed many in the wilderness with bread, and he imparted the bread of life unto whole multitudes that came to hear his divine doctrines. If we respect his goodness, he was goodness itself; if his clemency in imparting hereof, he was placability itself; most placable was he, or in effect a privileged place, whereunto all might repair, and come unto him, as the infant unto the mother's lap, where the dugs of

¹ Tertul. in Apologet.

mercy are never dry. Stedfast was he in love without change, sufficient without want, free without desert, and evermore ready to do good unto all. His love was over all (would all have accepted of his love), as the sun is the same to rich and poor, if they will open their eyes and walk in the light thereof.

5. "This is a true saying, (saith the Apostle) that Christ came into the world to save sinners."² Was this benefit restrained unto some? "No," saith St. John, "it was for all sinners: he is the reconciliation for our sins, and not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world³," saith he. The further any good reacheth, the more noble it is: The commission of the Apostles was, "Preach glad tidings⁴:" as it could not be but acceptable, so was it large also, "Preach it to all creatures," according to that of the Psalm, "Their sound went out into all lands."⁵ Samuel said unto Saul, "Thou hast cast away the Lord: there is the very cause of thy rejection."⁶ "God," saith the wise man, "hath not made death, neither delighteth he in the destruction of sinners⁷," "Who would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth."⁸ He would not have the

² 1 Tim. iv. 9

⁴ Mark xvi. 15.

⁶ 1 Sam. xv. 26.

⁸ 1 Tim. ii. 4.

³ 1 John ii. 2.

⁵ Ps. xix. 4.

⁷ Wis. i. 13.

work of his own hand miscarry, who desireth nothing more than the good of all. "Wisdom lifteth up her voice to all that pass by; she calleth in the high street, saying, O ye foolish, how long will ye love foolishness?"¹ "Turn you," saith the prophet, "from your unrighteousness, and you shall live: why will you die, O you house of Israel?" The rich man sendeth his servants to call in all unto the great supper²: his revealed will calleth all, and his will of well-pleasing respecteth all, "Come, receive the kingdom prepared for you." "Go into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels:" a kingdom is prepared of God for men, not destruction; this is from men themselves. He who would have gathered Jerusalem as the hen doth her chickens under her wings, showeth how much he respected her welfare, if she would have hearkened unto him³: God forbid to think otherwise, but that he loveth the welfare of man. "The sun," saith St. Chrysostom, "extendeth his beam universally: If any wilfully shut their eyes, and will not behold the light thereof, is the fault in the sun? No, verily."⁴

6. For the time of the abode which our Saviour had amongst men, "He went about,"

¹ Prov. i. 20.

² Luke xiv. 23.

³ Matt. xxiii. 37.

⁴ Chrysost. hom. in Jo. hom. i.

saith St. Peter, "doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him⁵:" neither did he cease to extend his goodness towards his very enemies, for while they were seeking to slay him, he sought to save them; and never so much regarded his own, as he did the common welfare and benefit of others. The candle being enlightened, with what carefulness did he seek the lost groat? What mountains and deserts did he wander to find, and finding, bring home man, the stray sheep, leaving the ninety and nine or companies of angels in glory!⁶ How lovingly did he invite all to come unto him, helping all, refusing none!

7. By this we learn, that we are not in the world for ourselves, but, setting Christ's example before our eyes, how we ought to endeavour that we may (in any thing we can) to further others. Of all living creatures there is none created to a more loving and sociable end than is man: but none more ordained to do good each to other than are Christian men. "While we are in the way," saith St. Austin, "let us bear one another's burden, that we may rest together at the end of the way." In artificial buildings one stone doth bear up another; much more should the same be done in that building, wherein, saith St. Peter,

⁵ Acts x. 38.

⁶ Luke xv. 4.

all the faithful are as lively stones.¹ Nature hath taught the beavers to help one another in swimming, and the cranes flying over the mountain Taurus, when the foremost is weary in beating the air, that the next should succeed, and so in order every one to labour for the safety of them all. Grace doth teach us the same lesson, or rather the Author of all grace by his example, whose sole desire was to do good generally unto all: his merits were sufficient (all confess) and efficient too: where was the fault? You would not.

8. We show whom we resemble, when we endeavour ourselves to do good unto all, when we have compassion on some; and save others with fear, pulling them out of the fire.² We know not, how soon we may stand in need of God's help, and therefore should desire nothing more than to show ourselves helpful unto others. He (saith St. Austin) is rightly called a Christian, that is ready to help all.³ It was the voice of Cain⁴: Am I my brother's keeper? it was the answer of those that conspired the death of the Son of God: What is it to us? look thou to it⁵: speaking unto Judas, when he had betrayed innocent blood, as if they cared for no more but themselves. It is the practice of worldings to be politic

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 5.

² Jude 22, 23.

³ Aug. de vita Christi.

⁴ Gen. iv. 9.

⁵ Matt. xxvii. 4.

to themselves; to make no conscience, like greedy harpies, how they spoil others, so they enrich themselves. In Pharaoh's dream the lean devoured the fat⁶; but in the course of these men, the fat devour the lean; or as the fishes in the sea, where the greater do eat up the less; and so we are enemies one to another, like the Midianites within themselves. As for these-minded men, (saith Origen,) that punishment, "thou didst send forth thy wrath, and the earth devoured them," is verified in these⁷: Hath not the earth devoured them, which waking to talk of earth, sleeping dream of earth? which never mind any other but the possession of the earth? The poor man wanteth, but yet the greedy, raking, rich man lacketh many things more. The earth hath devoured them: Satan came from compassing the earth: and these too are compassing of earthly things, but never think of compassing heaven.

9. To let these go. "Be you merciful, (saith our Saviour,) as your heavenly Father is merciful: Give and it shall be given you."⁸ A good world, indeed, was it when men were thus affected within themselves. David saw a woman look with a sorrowful countenance, and she needed not wait long for a day of

⁶ Gen. xli. 3.

⁷ Misisti iram, et terra devoravit eos.—*Origen in Psal.*

⁸ Luke vi. 36.

hearing: Himself cometh unto her and demanded of her what was her grief, "Woman, what aileth thee?"¹ here was a princely mind in David given to do good. "If any be fallen, (saith the apostle,) restore such a one in the spirit of meekness²:" and in another place, "Be courteous one to another and tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave you³:" here was a remembrance of the love of Christ moving Christian men within themselves to love, to do good within themselves. "This (saith Philo) is to imitate God the fountain of all goodness, when we are rich, not to be rich unto ourselves; when we are wise, not to be wise unto ourselves; for whom only we are not born, but for the help and assistance of others⁴:" as Christ was not born unto himself, but for the good of us all. It sheweth men are of a right disposition when they are desirous to do good.

10. In this then that hath been spoken, concerning our Saviour's compassion towards the state of man, we learn these things:

First, that we doubt not of the promises of the Messias, when we see he was both God and man.

2. Secondly, that we love him more fer-

¹ 2 Sam. xiv. 5.

² Gal. vi. 1.

³ Eph. iv. 32.

⁴ Philo de mund. fabr.

vently, whom we see to have bestowed so much love and grace upon us.

3. Thirdly, that we endeavour no way to be hurtful unto others, always carrying before us the example of our Saviour, who was ever doing good while he was here a pilgrim in the world: and hath said unto us all, "Learn of me;" or, "I have given you an example."⁵

CHAPTER IX.

How little Christ esteemed popularity, and glory of the world; and how by his example, we learn to do the like.

AND now, let us call to mind a little, how far Christ was from seeking the glory of this world, "To whose greater glory it was (saith Origen), that he appeared without glory⁶: to whose strength, that he came in weakness." When the people brought him into Jerusalem with an Hosanna; while they were singing, he was weeping; when they would have given him the title and dignity of a king⁷, he got away into a solitary place, hiding himself as

⁵ John xiii. 15.

⁶ Orig. lib. 1. cont. Cels.

⁷ John vi. 15.

nothing at all regarding that weathercock blast of popular applause. Christ was no way inclinable to those men's disposition, who as mills go, and grind no longer than the puff of wind holds. He fled from a kingdom amongst men, whose kingdom was not (as himself told Pilate) of this world¹; he came to conquer, but not after the manner of men; they obtain victory by invading, he by yielding; they by killing, he by dying; they by force of weapons, he by the power and efficacy of his word. He came to deliver his people, and to vanquish their enemies; but it was other enemies than Tiberius, or all the Roman power; and his conquest was after another manner than worldly conquerors are wont to use, who conquer by slaying their enemies, he by submitting himself to them: they came forth in the day of battle with pomp and glory; he to the subduing of the whole world to his obedience; and to vanquish the devil, cometh forth in all humility, and sendeth his servants to suffer whatsoever the world would do unto them.

2. But in all his humility flying from glory, glory followed him: when he was circumcised as a man, yet was he named a Saviour of men²; lying in a manger at Bethlehem, yet is he adored of grave sages that came

¹ John xviii. 36.

² Luke ii. 21.

from far³: dying as a man, yet is he worshipped and believed on as God from everlasting; so did majesty appear in his greatest humility. Christ could have borne as great a part in the world, as ever monarch in the world did; but we see he utterly despised all worldly pomp: "I seek not mine own praise⁴," saith he: when he was called a friend of publicans and sinners, he put it up, and was contented so to be reputed amongst men: after many of his miracles, he specially charged those on whom he had bestowed the benefit of their recovery, to conceal the author of their health⁵; and sometimes he steals away from the multitude, lest haply they should magnify him.⁶

3. "O holy Son of God (saith one), when the candle is lightened, why wilt thou have it put under a bushel, why wilt thou not show thy glory unto men? Was it because thy kingdom was not of this world? True, Lord, and therefore I rejoice to see thee in humility." "Until the age of thirty years we find," saith St. Bernard, "(excepting only his disputing with the doctors in the temple) no other, but that our Saviour led a silent and a solitary life."⁷ What did he fear? vain-glory? who was the glory of the Father. He feared

³ Matt. ii. 8.

⁴ John viii. 50.

⁵ Matt. ix. 30.

⁶ John vi. 15.

⁷ Bern. in Ser. de Ver.

indeed, but was it in regard of himself? No, it was for us, who were to be feared; and therefore he would draw us by his precept and practice from ambitious desires.

When the tempter (as hath been showed) offered him the glory of the world, (where we may observe that the affectation of glory is the temptation of the devil,) Christ would not so much as hear of vain-glory, and therefore sharply reproveth him, with the testimony of the law of giving worship, or glory unto God.¹

4. Although it was but seldom that he used reprehensions, yet we find that there were none whom the Son of God did ever more often reprove, or more openly rebuke, than a kind of men, called the Pharisees; having their name, because of their separating themselves from other men. These were those he resembled to painted sepulchres, as being fair without and foul within: all their holiness was no other but a show of holiness: their corner praying to be seen of men; their trumpet-blowing alms, to have a little glory in the world. Our Saviour could not away with this fashion, and therefore willeth his disciples to pray in secret; that is, with a mind (although seen), yet not caring to be seen of men, and to give their alms plainly, not to have a little applause of the world, but to

¹ Deut x. 12.

give sincerely, without any respect had, either of reward or of praise.²

And thus we see, how far we should be from hunting after popular applause, and vain-glory of the world, by the precept and practice of the Son of God himself.

5. It is a wonderful case to consider, how we make this our chiefest jewel, how all the sheaves of the field do fall down before a conceit of pre-eminency, whereas nothing is more fickle, nothing more uncertain. The word used to signify all that was showed when all the glory of the world was showed³, is "Doxa⁴," which signifieth no other but a shadow, a show. What is praise but a puff of wind, which sometimes bloweth one way and sometimes another? or as the echo, which makes a sound, but is indeed no substance? Wherefore if the tempter of glory say, All this will I give thee: the Christian will say, All this set I nothing by! What is our mirth, but a little sunshine before a storm? What is our peace, but a calm before a tempest? The forbidden fruit was most desired: forbidden pleasures are most desired, which are often gone, before we have enjoyed them.

If in any thing a Christian man show himself what he is, then surely most especially, in

² Matt. vi. 3.

³ Matt. iv. 8.

⁴ Δόξα.

being crucified to the flesh and the world: the pleasures of the one, the vain pomp and glory of the other. Three there were crucified upon the cross together, two malefactors, and Christ in the midst: and three there are to be crucified in Christ's members: the flesh, and the world, as the two thieves, the spirit, as Christ in the midst. The flesh is the thief upon the right hand, according to that of the Apostle: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh¹:" the world is the thief upon the left hand, according to that: "The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."² In the midst of these is the spirit also crucified, according to that: "A troubled spirit is a sacrifice unto God."³ The thief on the left hand was not saved; this is the state of the world, from whence Christ hath taken his, "That they be not condemned with the world."⁴ The thief on the right hand is saved; so is the crucified flesh with the spirit, when both are remembered of Christ in his kingdom, and are with him in Paradise.

6. Thus in abstaining from sensual delights, as also in despising the world and the glory thereof, we attain unto the perfection of a Christian state. "Behold," saith Christ unto his disciples, "we ascend unto Jerusalem."

¹ Gal. v. 24.

² Ps. li. 17.

³ Gal. vi. 14.

⁴ 1 Cor. xi. 32.

leaving, as it were, the Pharisees, following the world's glory, which his should no way affect. If there were no other reason to move us to seek after heaven, and heavenly things, this one might suffice, that Christ did only this. Coming into the world, he never followed the shows and shadows thereof. Again, if there were no other cause to make us little esteem of worldly vanities, yet that the end of them is dangerous, this only were enough.

"What is it," saith St. Austin, "to be lifted up in this world, and in another world to be cast down, here to shine in glory, and hereafter to consume in misery?"⁵

7. Hereunto may be added, how little worldly glory is worth, being fully considered: first, because it is vile, according to that which Mattathias told his son when he was dying; "Fear not (said he) the words of a sinful man: for his glory is as dung⁶." Secondly, because it is of no continuance, according to that of the prophet Isaiah, "All the glory of man is as the flower of the field."⁷ Thirdly, because it is deceitful, according to that of Baruch, "Where are they that sometimes had glory amongst men?"⁸ as if he should have said, they are no where to be found, their glory hath deceived them. Fourthly, because it is subject to alteration, according

⁵ Aug. Epist. iii.

⁶ 1 Mac. ii. 62.

⁷ Isa. xl. 8.

⁸ Bar. iii. 16.

to that of Hosea, "I will change their glory into ignominy."¹

Ahithophel for all his policy², Haman for all his sway³, found the uncertainty hereof, and certainty of that which is said of human glory. "What was the cause (saith St. Chrysostom) that the house spoken of in the Gospel fell?"⁴ Was it in the wind, or the tempest, or the waters? No. What was the cause then that the house fell? The text saith, It was builded upon the sand: the foundation was not good to build upon: Hope of riches or glory is a weak foundation: to let riches and glory go, and to build upon the rock, or trust in God only, is that building which will never fail, what wind, what storm, what waters soever swell and rage against it: excepting our trust in God, all human respects are but froth.

8. Fie upon that folly that delights more to seem unto men, than to be in truth and verity unto God. A strange practice there is in the world, that goeth about to alter that countenance which God hath formed so and so, by a kind of devised painter-like stuff; because God hath not done as was meet, as they think, they would teach him how and how he must have made them. Christ said of the tribute-money, "Whose image is this?" and

¹ Hos. iv. 7.

² 2 Sam. xvii. 23.

³ Esth. vii. 10.

⁴ Chrys. Ho. iv. ad pop. Antioch.

the same may be said concerning some, Whose visage or countenance is this? The workman is wont to grow out of love with his work, seeing it deformed by others: how can we pray or look up to God when we are disguised, and not of that form he hath given us? or look up to heaven, but think impiety shall not enter there? The foolish virgins were answered in this manner: "I know you not."⁵ God knows not these with the knowledge of approbation. To leave this device of seeking a little glory wherein some have gone about to make (as it were) very images of themselves—it is light behaviour: They may think for a time to deceive others, whereas indeed they deceive themselves; and I pray God they do not one day find as much.

What is it to have a foul guest in a fair house? What is it to have a little praise and glory of men, and to lose praise and acceptance with God? St. Ambrose saith of Joseph, "He was fair in body, but fairer in mind"⁶, which is best of all.

9. To glory in honour and praise of men, to glory in building, in banquetting, is frivolous: to account none worthy of honour but ourselves, to seek for ostentation sake to excel others, is mere vanity: of valuable things

⁵ Matt. xxv. 12.

⁶ Pulcher corpore, sed pulchrior animo.—*Ambr. de Joseph.*

nothing more light, more uncertain than these. What are we all but dust and ashes? How came we into the world? Naked with Job, and naked we must return again¹: "Go to the sepulchres (saith St. Austin), and there show me a difference if you can amongst the bones, between the rich and poor, between the master and the servant, between the greatest senator and lowest subject?" "Lo this is he (saith the prophet) that put his trust in riches²," as if he would say, You see what comes of putting trust in earthly things. It is said of Herod, in the Acts of the Apostles³, that he gloried to himself of vain-glory given him. What became of this? The Holy Scripture telleth us, he was eaten up with worms: and Josephus, also writing of his end, accordeth with the Holy Scripture, that it was miserable⁴: but first, saith he, there appeared an owl sitting upon his head, and after he was taken with the before-named torments: he was a little before called a god, now it appears he is a miserable man: where were all his physicians? They could not ease his pains; no, all his servants cannot defend him from silly worms.

10. Christ told them that sought superiority above others, they knew not what they

¹ Job i. 21.

² Acts xii. 23.

² Ps. liii. 7.

⁴ Joseph. lib. 19. de vet. Jud.

sought: and it may be said of those that seek after glory, by a kind of brokage, they know not what they seek. The people could not in any thing more displease the Apostles than when they would run in, and were ready to sacrifice unto them⁵; "The just man (saith Gregory) when he is praised is then humbled, fearing he is not unto God, as he is esteemed of with men:" When he hath done any thing amiss, he accuseth himself: if any thing well, he giveth all the praise only unto God, according to that of the prophet, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the praise."⁶ The prophet teacheth us to speak twice against our own praise, we are so ready to praise ourselves: "Yea, in our best actions (saith St. Ambrose) take heed of that same thief, glory, which would steal away from us all acceptation with God:" Job saith, "If I have thought gold my strength⁷, if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, if I have said to treasure, My trust! if I have exalted myself in riches:" by which kind of speech the holy man in effect saith, I have not thought gold my strength, or said to treasure, My trust! or exalted myself in riches, or lift up my hand against the fatherless.

11. Plutarch writeth, that it was the man-

⁵ Acts xiv. 13.

⁶ Ps. cxv. 1.

⁷ Job xxxi. 24.

ner of vain-glorious men to have a kind of jester to sing their praises in great assemblies; but how far godly men have been from this foolishness, who could not abide such jarring interludes, we may easily perceive. Moses would not be counted the son of Pharaoh's daughter¹, though he might; St. Paul would not count himself worthy of the name of an apostle²; all the instruments with their noise, could not make the three children fall down before the idol³; nor all the popularity in the world make good men affect vain-glory: they know both what it is, and how soon it vanisheth. Those who from some high turret or tower behold things far beneath under them, account them small and little; but peradventure they that remain near them think they are great: in like manner to those whose minds are elevated to heavenly things, and have their affections on high, worldly glory seems so little, and so little worth, as they cannot but wonder why men near it in affection should think it so great, and so much desire it as they do, being so transitory and variable as it is.

12. Where is Pharaoh, that gloried in his chariots?⁴ doth not his overthrow tell boasting champions that a host is nothing without

¹ Heb. xi. 24.

² Dan. iii. 18.

³ 1 Cor. xv. 9.

⁴ Ex. xiv. 28.

the God of hosts? Where are the giants that would build so high and would glory in a name?⁵ doth not God's word tell us they were scattered and defeated of their purpose? Is glory then so fleeting? Then may worldlings say: Farewell, world, forasmuch as there is no trust in thee, which failest them whom thou most favourest; they soonest fall when they think themselves surest. Farewell, world, thou that quarrelest, but dost not pacify; in thee there is no joy without trouble, no peace without discord, no love without suspicion, no rest without fear, no abundance without blemish, no honour without discontent, no estate without carefulness of mind. Farewell, glory of the world, seeing in thy delights promises are made and never kept; in whose vineyard men labour, but are never rewarded: farewell, world, which callest the rash, valiant: the proud, seemly: the covetous, good husbands: the babblers, eloquent: the wanton, youthful: farewell, world, which deceiveth all that trust thee, which dost promise to the ambitious, honours: to the greedy, rewards: to the covetous, riches: to the young, time: farewell, I say, vain-glory, which because thou art not of God, deceivest all.

13. It was before said, that our Saviour told them that sought superiority, they knew

⁵ Gen. xi. 4.

not what they sought¹: we see the same true in the condition of the world. When Gyges, a great worldling, would know, if any man were more happy than himself (thinking him most happy which had most riches and most glory), it was answered him, that one Psophidius, a poor old man of the Arcadians (who was rich with a little, and had never gone all his lifetime from the place where he was bred and born, but there lived peaceably,) that this man was far happier than he. If heathen men could so little esteem of earthly glory, what should Christians do? Whom should they think most happy, but those who most mind the state of happiness to come, and for worldly glory (in the name of God) let it go? The Church of Christ is not triumphant and glorious in earth, but triumphant and glorious above in heaven. Tobit sat musing upon the shore of the river Tigris, which with a swift stream ran by him²; we sit down by meditation of the inconstancy of worldly glory, which runneth along with a main current, calling to mind that glory which is everlasting in heaven. For glory, the prophet Jeremiah teacheth us how and wherein to glory: saying, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, the rich man glory in his riches, the strong man in his strength: but let him that glorieth

¹ Matt. xx. 22.

² Tobit vi. 1, 2.

glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth me, saith the Lord.”³

CHAPTER X.

Of Christ's continual labours and travails in the world ; whereby we may take a survey of our Christian condition here.

THE sick man now about to take some bitter medicine, when he sees but the physician himself begin unto him, it makes him the more willing to receive the potion how bitter soever : the labours and travails of this transitory life have, no doubt, a very unpleasing taste to human palate, but seeing Christ the physician of our souls, not only take an assay thereof, but even drink a full draught for our redemption, we should be the more willing to admit the receiving of this medicine. When we consider his long watchings, wherein he passed whole nights in prayer ; his often journeying, when he passed from place to place to instruct and teach in every city ; his fasting ; his suffering all along from his very infancy ; his flying into Egypt ; what shall we

³ Jer. ix. 23.

else behold in him, but a life full of labours and travails never ended but with loss of life? Was it not thy birth, O Christian soul, which was then to be brought forth, when our Rachel travailed unto death? was it not thy cause for which our Jacob endured so many years' servitude? he who with one drop of blood could have redeemed a world, would notwithstanding suffer so many labours, so many travails, that no labours whatsoever might dismay us, which are incident unto the life of man.

2. At five several times did he so far proceed in labours as there ensued the effusion of his blood: first, in his circumcision, there he began to redeem us; secondly, in his prayer, there he showed how he affected us; thirdly, when he was scourged, there he cured us by his stripes; fourthly, when he was fastened to the cross, there he paid the price and ransom of our sins; fifthly, when his side was opened with the spear, there was an issue made for the streams and rivers of grace. By the first we learn to labour in cutting off the unlawful desires of sin; by the second, to mourn with sighs and groans; by the third, to mortify the pleasures of the flesh; by the fourth, to be crucified unto the world; by the fifth, to have our hearts wounded with a daily remembrance of Christ's unspeakable love.

3. The holy man Job suffered as great trials and troubles, we think, as great may be;

but for all that, Christ's were greater. For look we into his whole life ; see we therein every age ; go we to every place, where he was conversant in ; nay, take we a view of his sacred person, and therein see we every part suffering.—Every age : in his infancy, how cold and hard was his cradle at Bethlehem ? how busy was he with the doctors in the temple ? To come to further years, what hatred did he endure most undeservedly of the Jews, even hatred unto the death ?—Every place : he suffered hunger in the desert, resistance in the temple, sorrow in the garden, contumelies in the judgment hall, and crucifying itself without the city.—Every part : his eyes suffered tears, his ears suffered reproaches, his taste suffered gall, his head pricking of thorns, his hands the piercing of nails ; his whole body is sacrificed as an offering for sin. Now there is no reason that the servant should be above the master.¹ When Jonathan's armour-bearer saw Jonathan go up the hard and steep rocks : " Well (saith he), go, sir, I will follow thee² : " When we see our Jonathan go before us in the travails and labours suffered for us, should we not be emboldened to endure labours, though no way answerable unto his, yet such as are agreeable with the condition of our life, seeing

¹ Matt. x. 25.

² 1 Sam. xiv. 7.

we are going in the land of promise by the desert of this world?

4. Strange it was, that David, a man after God's own heart¹, as the Scripture speaketh, should be so much afflicted as he was. Strange it was, that Daniel, a man beloved of God² (as the angel told him), strange it was I say, that these of all others should be so much in labours and travails of the world, as they were. But considering that the life of man is but as the days which go before the sabbath of rest, we do the rather less marvel, because we see the Son of God himself treading the wine-press alone, and a man full of labours, as the prophet speaketh.³ Christ's dearest friends in the world, his own apostles; yea, the blessed Virgin herself, found this life no other but a state subject to many and great sorrows. "What should we otherwise think of it, (saith one) but this: All the life of a Christian man, according unto the Gospel, is no other but a cross and martyrdom."⁴

"Of this martyrdom⁵ (saith Isidore), it is two-fold; the one, in open suffering; the other, in inward or hidden virtue," which is ready to suffer greater martyrdom; but daily suffering

¹ Ps. cxlii. 2. ² Dan. ix. 23. ³ Isai. liii. 3.

⁴ Tota vita Christiani hominis, secundum Evangelium, crux et martyrdom.

⁵ In aperta passione. In occulta virtute.—*Isid. Ety. lib. vii. c. 11.*

less martyrdom, in bearing the afflictions and crosses of the world; in mortifying, or as it were putting to death the evil desires of the flesh, for conspiring and intending the subversion of the soul. The godly have martyred hearts.

5. Besides these spiritual labours, we know Adam in the time of innocence laboured⁶; and that God hath made nothing to be idle; that he will have no ciphers in his arithmetic, or slothful servants in his vineyard. Every thing in nature doth accomplish its end by a kind of motion; and therefore much more man of all other, who by slothfulness doth become a very burthen of the earth. For in this vice, wit, understanding, and all honest endeavours lie buried, as it were in a loathsome sepulchre, from whence ariseth the unsavoury smell of corrupt manners. Scipio banished all idle soldiers and unprofitable people from his camp: He found it true by experience in the course and continuance of wars, which the Romans had with them of Carthage, that whilst they had enemies in Africa, they knew not what vices meant in Rome. The Christian man's life, as it should of all others be far from vice, so withal should it be from this slothfulness, the cause of vice. It was the apostle's rule, "If any would not labour he should not eat."⁷

⁶ Gen. ii. 15.

⁷ 2 Thess. iii. 10.

6. Now between these two, the labours of the mind and body, we see what we must frame ourselves unto, the time of our continuance here : we have set our hand to the plough, and in the first place let us take care of all other things, that God's husbandry goes forward well with us, howsoever the world goes for a time. This is the difference between the labours of the righteous, and theirs who weary themselves in the way of vanity. When the prophet speaks of trouble, which the first of these shall have, he speaks of deliverance. "The Lord delivereth them," saith he, "out of all¹:" but of the other he speaketh, "Great misery remains for the ungodly;" and there is no mention at all of their deliverance. When he speaks of sensual men, he saith, "They are not in trouble as other men."² What was the sequel? "Therefore pride compasseth them about."

7. Wherefore when the labours and sorrows of this transitory life grieve us, we may think of deliverance, and of our arrival at that place where no labours and sorrows are. We see merchants for gain, soldiers for triumph, to put themselves into many dangers; and yet neither doth the merchant always compass his gain, nor the soldier always triumph: but put the case they do, yet are they not long to enjoy either. It falleth out otherwise in our

¹ Ps. xxxiv. 19.

² Ps. lxxiii. 18.

labours; the gain is certain, the triumph everlasting. "Every work is made light (saith St. Jerome), when the reward of the same work is thought upon."³ But here is a reward so great, that it cannot be measured; so precious, that it cannot be esteemed; so permanent, that no continuance of time can diminish it. Let us call to mind how sweet freedom is after a time of bondage. It is said of the faithful, that they shall sit with Abraham; and sitting presupposeth rest.

The state of happiness to come is called in the Revelation, "The supper of the Lamb⁴;" the supper, and so the last refection after the labours of the day. Travellers having but sorry usage at their first bait in their journey are wont to say, Well, the best is, we shall sup at another place. So when we perceive we have not much rest here, we may say, We shall come one day where the entertainment will be better. God knows what is fittest for passengers; labour in the way, rest at the end of the way. It was the sentence of Almighty God, The woman labour in the fruit of the womb, the man labour in the fruit of the earth.

8. Though Joseph spake a little hardly to his brethren, and made them for a time to

³ Quodlibet opus leve fieri solet cum ejus præmium cogitatur.

⁴ Rev. xix. 9.

travel to and fro, yet he loved them never the worse.¹ But these travails and sorrows are surely hurtful unto men! King Cyrus was not of that opinion, when for a punishment to the people of Sardis, he commanded them to spend their time in gaming and feasting. Whereas the contrary hath the contrary effect. Eight persons entered into the ark, and eight only came forth again at the end of that sorrowful deluge.² Noah and his children all this time little thought of any other thing, than how the world was now in the chastising, and therefore it was not a time for any other cogitations.³

9. Having given our names unto Christ, it remaineth that we look for a warfare. To them assigneth he the crown, who fight the battle. When we suffer labours and travails in the world for righteousness' sake, it sheweth that we are under Christ's standard. Our watchword is, Be constant unto the end. It makes men suffer the more patiently, when they see others suffer before them; but most of all Christians, who behold Christ enduring so many labours, both before them and for them. Is it meet that thy servant should live in pleasure, when thou art full of toil and travail? Is it fit that he should lie at ease, and thou sweat in labours? What reason is it

¹ Gen. xlii. 7.

² Gen. vii. 7.

³ Gen. viii. 16.

then, O man? Is it meet that the Lord Jesus, who is so far above all earthly monarchs, as the greatest Lord is above his meanest servants; that he who is not only thy Master but thy Maker, should pass his time in continual travail, and thou in continual ease, in a resty slothfulness void of all travail? Hea-then men were wont to say that the ants, who live and travail, and make provision together, do show men how to become fit members of a commonwealth. But the care indeed of holy men, who were ever watchful, provident, industrious, teaches us to become fit members in that mystical body which is here only militant.

It was said unto that laborious servant, "O thou good servant, thou hast been faithful over little, I will make thee ruler over much, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."⁴ Thus we see Christ in labours and travails of the world. Job is fasting and sacrificing, while his children are banqueting.⁵ Such as repine at labours and travails, show they make no other account, but to live at all ease, and at quiet in the world: certainly the labouring man's life is commendable; his estate is a remembrance of Adam created to work, his body is refreshed with rest, his health is maintained by travail, his hungry morsels

⁴ Matt. xxv. 25.

⁵ Job i. 5.

make him more thankful to God than the greatest delicacies of the rich, his coarse bread and small drink being healthful nourishments. It was not Adam's case alone, but it is the case of every one in his calling. In the sweat of thy brow, or industry in thy place, thou shalt eat thy bread. But what are all these labours to be compared to the least joys prepared for us in heaven? When the people were delivered out of Egypt, God might have brought them by a nearer way into the land of promise; it seemed good in his most divine ordinance they should for a time travail in the wilderness: we labour, and then, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; they rest from their labours.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Christ's teaching the multitude, and his actions before he taught: which doth also teach us what we should do.

"AT sundry times, and in divers manners, (saith the Apostle) God spake in old time to our fathers by the prophets¹: in these last days hath he spoken unto us by his Son,

¹ Heb. i. 1.

whom he hath made heir of all things, who was the brightness of his glory," of whom also the divine voice from heaven testified : "Hear him."²

To weigh a little his heavenly instructions, we find in them all along that of the prophet performed, calling him long before, "Wonderful counsellor," the best, or most excellent that ever gave counsel.³ "Come we unto his first sermon upon the mount⁴, which if we devoutly consider," saith St. Austin, "we shall find therein contained whatsoever doth appertain to the perfection of a Christian life. There see that poverty, which at one stroke doth cut down by the root all the solicitous desires of earthly things : there see that meekness that doth utterly exclude all hatred and contention amongst men : there see those tears that do rebaptize the sorrowful and repentant soul : there see that hunger and thirst which doth bring everlasting satiety : there see that mercy that is ever helpful to the necessity of men, and shall also receive mercy from God : there see that peace that causeth all concord and unity amongst the faithful members of Christ Jesus : last of all, there see that patience that lifteth man above the stars of heaven, to whom these misty clouds of this inferior re-

² Matt. iii. 17.

³ Isai. ix. 6.

⁴ Matt. v. 3.

gion, and storms here beneath, are as it were under his feet.”¹

2. To proceed with his form of teaching², which was, as one that had power and authority to pierce the very heart. Who could look into man, but the Maker of man? or who could enjoin a law to man's thoughts, but he which knew their thoughts? He showeth that he came not to break but to fulfil the law. The Jews thinking that only a false oath was unlawful: no, that was not all, Christ would not have them swear at all, saying: “Let your communication be, Yea, yea, Nay, nay.”³ Whereupon St. Basil saith, “Yea in speech, and yea in heart: nay in speech, and nay in heart.” Christ being asked of the Pharisees, whether it were lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause⁴? they could soon answer him themselves out of Moses' law, concerning the giving a bill of divorce; our Saviour showeth the original of this, That it was permitted only by reason of the hardness of their hearts; and therefore openeth the matter unto his disciples, and setteth down as it were a full determination of this doubt, that he who putteth away his wife (except it be for fornication) and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and St. Paul so taketh it

¹ August. in Ser. in Mont.

² Matt. v. 37.

³ Matt. vii. 27.

⁴ Matt. xix. 7.

without further scruple: "The woman is bound unto the man so long as the man liveth." By the law of coveting, the Jews understood the outward signs, "Thou shalt not covet, that is, thou shalt not do the signs of him that coveteth:" Christ tells them there was more required in this law than so: for why? not only the outward, but also the inward man must concur to the observation of the same; and therefore the very intention of the mind was to answer the fault in God's consistory.

3. To wade deeper into this doctrine, which was all along lively, grave, and full of majesty,—the Evangelists themselves do sufficiently declare, and manifest as much, according to that reply of the messengers sent from the high priests, "Never man spake as this man speaks⁵," or that of St. Peter, "Lord, thou hast the words of life⁶," or that of the woman who was so moved at the end of one of Christ's exhortations, as she could not but with admiration break out into this applause, "Blessed was the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck."⁷ Whereby was showed that Christ taught in so effectual manner as he made his auditors to be stirred up in his exhortations, and seeing he was able

⁵ John vii. 46.

⁶ John vi. 68.

⁷ Luke xi. 27.

to catechise the doctors themselves, they were astonished at his understanding and answers.¹

4. For the tenor of this his teaching, it was with much mildness, rather lovingly to induce than violently to draw, as most applicable unto the children of grace, of whom the prophet Ezekiel spake, "I will take from them a stony heart, and give them a soft heart²;" of these the prophet also speaketh to this effect, saying, "A willing people shall serve me." Who would not run when Christ lovingly calleth? Nay, which is more, who would not cast off all impediments, when he saith, "Thou shalt be blessed, thou shalt find rest unto thy soul?" In the fourth of St. Luke's Gospel³, when he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up, there he goeth into the synagogue, as his custom was upon the sabbath day; a book of the law is delivered unto him, which being opened, he found the place where it was written, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me that I should preach the Gospel to the poor: he hath sent me that I should heal the broken-hearted⁴;" closing the book, and opening that Scripture, all wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. Sometimes he taught re-

¹ Luke ii. 47.

² Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

³ Luke iv. 17.

⁴ Isai. lxi. 1.

penitance, for he came not (as he saith) to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This repentance was also the first doctrine of John the Baptist⁵; this is a most necessary doctrine for the state of man, who by repentance should oftentimes commune with himself, debating God's cause against himself, and his own causes with the mercy of God. "A kind of death (saith St. Austin) is it to live without repentance⁶:" and therefore Christ the good physician applied this medicine of repentance unto the sick soul, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."⁷ Ahab thought Elias and his prophesyings did but trouble him⁸, as many think of the doctrine of repentance: but he found, and they shall find, it will be their own sins that at the last shall trouble them.

5. But to go forward with the sum of our Saviour's doctrine, as it was in this calling of sinners to repentance most peaceable, so was it also easy, plain, and perspicuous even when he treated of the profoundest mysteries: wherein he used neither pomp nor pride of affected eloquence, yet was it ponderous, without either fear, flattery, or by discourses mixed with gall and bitterness. He disannulled not the law of Moses, but rather rati-

⁵ Luke iii. 8.

⁶ Genus mortis est sine pœnitentia vivere.

⁷ Matt. ix. 13.

⁸ 1 Kings xviii. 17.

fied the same: that speaking of the circumcision of the flesh, which was the sign: he of the circumcision of the heart, which was the thing signified. In all which there was a powerful operation: the disciples reasoned, "Did not our hearts burn, while he opened the Scriptures?"¹ In this his teaching he also used parables, "A form of instruction taken (saith St. Jerome) from resembling one thing by another, which by a thing known is wont to draw the hearers to a more plain understanding of things unknown unto them, notwithstanding unto the perverse more intricate and mystical," according to that in St. Matthew, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, unto others in parables²," who were as these of whom the prophet spoke, "That hearing they should not hear, and seeing they should not see³," the reason was, their heart was waxen fat, and so in effect hearing they would not hear. "And thou wouldest not."

But for the divine instructions of the Son of God (which are evermore the same) they were, and are, of so high excellence, that if they were all written, St. John thought "The world would not contain the books⁴," meaning, would not conceive the high excellence thereof: these

¹ Luke xxiv. 32.

³ Isai. vi. 9.

² Matt. xiii. 11.

⁴ John xxi. 25.

are written that we may believe, these we hear as the disciples heard them in effect. "Thomas, blessed are they that have not seen, and yet do believe; blessed are they that hear the things that you hear."

6. By this also may we further learn, that Christ's actions were every way answerable unto his doctrine; his words preached holiness of life, his works preached the same, nay, (saith St. Luke,) "He began to do and teach⁵," He exhorted to meekness, who was himself the meek Lamb that opened not his mouth before the shearer; and so fulfilled he in his own person whatsoever he taught others to do; that the world might have a light both of good teaching and good following.

7. For the application hereof, and what we learn by Christ's teaching the multitude, and his actions before he taught; first, and principally, we learn that he was the very prophet whom God had promised by Moses to raise, and now had raised, "Even like himself⁶," whom all should hear, and hearing follow. We marvel often at their hardness, who having Christ amongst them, their ears were so chill they would not hear him; their eyes so blind they would not see him, who came as he ought to have come according to all the

⁵ Acts i. 1.

⁶ Deut. xviii. 18.

prophecies of old. Let the Scriptures themselves in this case manifest as much, and let all gainsayers for ever be silent. We marvel then that these did not receive him.

But to leave them and come unto ourselves, "Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever¹." "The prophets of old desired to see and hear him²:" did they not with the eyes of faith see him long before, or with the ears of faith hear the accomplishment of that joyful message sent from the great Emperor of the world, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son?"³ They saw him and heard him with the eyes and ears of the soul, and would have been glad to have seen and heard him with the eyes and ears both of body and soul, and so no doubt would many Christians have been glad to have seen him, if it had so pleased God. For what a joy would it have offered the beholders of his venerable countenance, of his graceful behaviour, to have heard his most admirable manner of exhortation, which would have made a Christian soul to dissolve itself, as it were, into consolation? Notwithstanding both the fathers before he came, and the faithful since, have as well the participation of his most heavenly presence as if they had

¹ Heb. xiii. 8

² Matt. xiii. 17.

³ Isai. vii. 14.

even then, when he walked in the world, beheld his presence, and heard his doctrine, which doctrine they daily hear.

8. This hearing is not all, for when Christ said, "Blessed are they that hear⁴;" he had not so soon done, but there was somewhat more behind, which was, "And keep it:" to show that hearing and keeping, and receiving blessing, knowing and doing, go together. In the law, were those clean sacrifices which did chew the cud only?⁵ No, they must chew the cud and divide the hoof. Christ saith of Mary that heard the word, "Mary hath chosen the good part⁶:" hearing is but a part: when the prophet speaks of the testimonies of God's law, he addeth this, "In keeping of them there is great reward⁷:" he doth not say, in only hearing of them, but in keeping of them. The promises of salvation in Holy Scriptures are not so much laid forth to the hearers, as to the doers of the will of God their heavenly Father. It was our Saviour's own assertion, "You are blessed in so doing."⁸ It was his own practice to do his Father's will that sent him. Thus as he joined in one, doing and teaching; so should we believing and following: that so a right faith and a Christian life, which are, as it

⁴ Luke xi. 28.

⁵ Levit. xi. 4, 5.

⁶ Luke x. 41.

⁷ Ps. xix. 11.

⁸ John xiii. 17.

were, coupled together by God, let no man put asunder: "You know these things, happy are you if you do them." Whatsoever we profess, we must not think to come to heaven by doing nothing worthy of our Christian calling. "It is true (saith St. Bernard) of good works, that they are not The cause of reigning, yet are they The way to the kingdom."¹ It was not much which was required of Naaman when he must go and wash in Jordan, yet somewhat must he do for the recovery of his health.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Christ's visiting the sick, his feeding the hungry, and curing all that came unto him: which do lay before us a most absolute rule of showing mercy and compassion.

WHETHER it were to behold our Saviour's miracles (for so came many of the people); or to be cured of their corporal maladies² (so came a multitude³), whether it were of desire to commune with him, (so came Nico-

¹ Causa regnandi. Via ad regnum. *Bern. in Cant.* ser. xii.

² John vi. 2.

³ Luke vi. 17.

demus ⁴), or of an affection to see him of whom so great fame went abroad (so came Zaccheus ⁵)—whether for these causes, or any other, so it was that a great company of people altogether came flocking after our Saviour in great abundance. As when some skilful physician repaireth to any populous city, the diseased of all other draw unto him; so came they unto Christ, who was able not only to cure their sick bodies, but even to raise to life again their sick (nay, respecting the life of grace, their dead) souls; looking upon all with the eye of mercy, showing he would not the death of a sinner, that came to die for sinners. Ancient and latter records ⁶ make mention of an epistle sent by Lentulus the proconsul unto the states and senate of Rome, therein showing them of one Jesus, who appeared in Jewry, going about doing good, and healing all of what infirmity soever they were taken.

2. Julian the Apostate himself confessed thus much of him, “Indeed,” saith he, “he cured certain blind men, and recovered some few that were diseased in body.” Yea, Julian, and that was enough to have made thee see him to be the Son of God, hadst thou not been obstinately blind. For was it ever heard

⁴ John iii. 2.

⁵ Luke xix. 3.

⁶ See note, p. 83.

since the beginning of the world, that any gave sight unto men born blind, except Christ the redeemer of the world?¹ The great power he showed in healing only by his word the diseases of the body, might have moved thee to believe on him for the health and welfare of thy soul. See him, Julian, doing such works; and if for no other cause, yet believe him for his works' sake.² The centurion had authority over his soldiers; if he said to one, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh.³ Christ's authority was as absolute over all diseases; if he said, Go, they departed; if Come, they obeyed⁴; but chiefly was he wont to command them to depart⁵: and not only diseases, but even his authority was the same over the devils themselves, whom he cast out⁶, bringing many tormented creatures into their right minds again.

3. Well did our Saviour Christ compare himself unto a physician, and so was he indeed. He wrought many cures, but when he cured the soul of man he wrought a cure indeed, for the effecting whereof he used divers kinds of medicine: The first, by diet, when he fasted forty days and

¹ John ix. 32.

² Matt. viii. 9.

³ Luke viii. 29.

² John xiv. 11.

⁴ Matt. viii. 32.

⁶ Mark v. 8.

forty nights.⁷ The second, by electuary, when he gave his most precious body and blood in his last supper.⁸ The third, by sweat, at his agony in the garden.⁹ The fourth, by plaister, when his face was spitted on by the Jews.¹⁰ The fifth, by potion, when he tasted vinegar mixed with gall.¹¹ The sixth, by letting of blood, when his hands and feet were pierced, yea, when his heart-vein was stricken, his side goaded with the spear.¹² Here was a cure of cures, which all the Galenists in the world may admire with reverence, and become his patients, who was such a physician for us all.

A strange kind of prescription he enjoins us; and every one of his patients must keep that prescription given unto him in the fifth of John, and fourteenth: "Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Christ hath wrought thy cure now, thy care now must be to keep a good diet for the time to come, because the relapse is wont to prove dangerous.

4. And here we may not omit to observe the manner of Christ's curing; he saith unto the sick man, in the second of St. Mark, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee. Take up thy bed and walk, thy sins be forgiven thee¹³."

⁷ Matt. iv. 1.

⁹ Luke xxii. 44.

¹¹ Matt. xxvii. 34.

¹³ Mark ii. 9.

⁸ Matt. xxvi. 26.

¹⁰ Mark xv. 19.

¹² John xix. 34.

as if he should have said, the cause of thy sickness is taken away, and by a consequent, thy sickness itself.

This, as it seemeth, made the woman of Canaan cry unto our Saviour, "Son of David, have mercy on me : my daughter is grievously sick, have mercy on me¹," as if she were afraid lest her own sins were the cause of her daughter's sickness. The prophet David saith, "Thou hast corrected man for iniquity." Achior said to Holophernes, "Inquire if this people have offended their God, otherwise all our warring will come to nothing, unless he send a punishment upon them for their sins."² Which made St. Jerome to say, "By our sins are these infidels made strong³;" and therefore a mean to lessen our punishments is to lessen our sins; which Christ can cure together with the diseases of the body, if we will but come unto him. It was said by one, of Cæsar's clemency, "They know not thy clemency, O Cæsar, who will not come unto thee."⁴ The same may be much more truly said of the Son of God, They know not his mercy, who will not come unto him, for the health both of body and soul.

¹ Matt. xv. 22.

² Judith v. 20.

³ Nostris peccatis barbari fortes facti sunt.—*Hiero. ad Helidor.*

⁴ Cic. in Orat.

5. When some earthly king will visit his subjects and people under him, they all, by way of gratulation, bring him presents, and offer the best gifts they can devise: but when the King of heaven came to visit his people they bring him in beds⁵ (saith the Evangelists) all that were diseased⁶: those were Christ's presents, and he took them in good part too, when they were brought unto him.⁷ It is said of David, that all who were indebted, distressed, or of a sorrowful mind, came unto him⁸: When we come unto Christ, we come unto him, to whom David himself came when he was distressed. The blind man threw off his sorry cloak to run to Christ.⁹ The centurion comes unto him for his sick servant¹⁰; he cast him not off (who had served him before time) now in time of sickness, but comes unto Christ for him.

A man that was deaf and dumb was brought unto him.¹¹ Christ openeth his ears, looseth his tongue, showing him the best use thereof: Go and give glory unto God. When the leper came unto him and said, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean¹²;" why, Leper? hadst thou come near any of the Pharisees,

⁵ Mark ii. 4.

⁷ Luke v. 19.

⁹ Mark x. 50.

¹¹ Mark vii. 34.

⁶ Matt. ix. 2.

⁸ 1 Sam. xxii. 2.

¹⁰ Luke vii. 6.

¹² Mark i. 40.

there was no other to be looked for of him, but Away with thee; thou mayest not approach near the congregation; I will in no case touch thee. No, Leper! Thou art unclean. What doth Christ? gently stretcheth out his hand, which was liberality against the covetous, which was humility against the proud, which was pity against the envious, and last of all, powerful against the incredulous. "If thou wilt (saith this leper), thou canst make me clean." Yes, he would, nay would to God we were but so willing as Christ is! He touched him, he healed him. When the physician recovers the sick, who hath the benefit? the sick party, or the physician? The centurion thought Christ's word was enough, and this leper that his will was enough: how willing he was to do good, we may see in that when the sick were not able to come unto him, he went to visit them; as he did to Peter's wife's mother¹, and the ruler's daughter.²

6. Amongst other works of mercy, his delivering those who were possessed of devils³, was most admirable, and none knew the benefit hereof better, than those who were partakers of this benefit. The evil spirits

¹ Matt. viii. 14.

² Matt. ix. 25.

³ Mark v. 8.

cry out, Jesus, thou Son of God, what have we to do with thee?⁴ Sure indeed! They had nothing to do with Christ, but Christ had to do with them⁵, to cast them out from men into herds of swine. Questionless, (saith St. Austin,) unless men did live like swine, Satan by temptation could never enter into them. Christ cast out evil spirits, and there are (saith Cassianus⁶) many evil spirits which we beseech him daily to cast out:—the spirit of pride, the spirit of fornication, and such other. Christ cast out seven devils out of Mary Magdalen⁷; and so many foul vices, as 1. pride; 2. covetousness; 3. luxury; 4. envy; 5. wrath; 6. incontinency; 7. sloth;—doth his grace daily cast out from us; and still he is casting forth evil spirits.

7. Another testimony of his most loving affection towards the sons of men, was his often refreshing the multitude, and specially in the wilderness, a place otherwise far unfit to procure food for so great a company; and therefore he used the words, “I have compassion upon the multitude.”⁸ This he spake when the people had now far to go, and therefore without relief might have fainted by the way.

⁴ Luke viii. 28.

⁵ Matt. viii. 32.

⁶ Cass. de Spi. Iræ.

⁷ Luke viii. 2.

⁸ Mark viii. 2.

By all these which have been laid down, the nature of the Son of God is discovered unto us; how much he tendereth man's welfare, and specially how ready he is to be helpful to all distressed persons, what infirmity soever they have. Hence we learn, first of all, to acknowledge his goodness; secondly, to have recourse unto him in time of need; and thirdly, to be merciful unto others by his example, who hath been merciful unto us.¹ The Apostles of our Lord saw by his deed, and heard by his doctrine, how much he would have them respect the miseries of others, and therefore were ever given to the same.

8. "Blessed are the merciful²," (saith our Saviour,) and if he say blessed, they are blessed indeed; it shall be said unto those alms-givers, and to those naked-clothers, Come, receive the kingdom prepared for you.³ The Holy Ghost compares our deeds of charity unto seeds sown⁴;—"They that sow plentifully,"—that is, do give plentifully. Now we know, that after sowing, in time comes the harvest; and when the harvest comes, there are many for one, and the husbandman's sowing is recompensed at harvest; so by this there is a kind of giving, which may be called gaining.

¹ Luke vi. 36.

² Matt. xxv. 35.

³ Matt. v. 8.

⁴ Gal. vi. 7.

The rich man in the Gospel⁵ cared for filling his barns; the Scripture calleth him fool: he never cared for filling the best barns, to wit, the bellies of the poor.

We may not think, (saith St. Chrysostom,) that God made rich men for the profit of the poor, but God made the poor for the profit of the rich; make you friends (saith the Scripture,) of wicked Mammon⁶; as if rich men should one day find that the poor were their best friends, when they come to be received into everlasting habitations.⁷ For Abraham and Lazarus, rich and poor both together (by the grace of God, and heed taken in time), shall rejoice together in the kingdom of heaven.

9. What more praiseworthy in a Christian man, than where God hath blessed, where industry hath gathered, and frugality saved, there by charitable deeds of mercy, to pity the distressed case of others? seeing Christ also accounteth this as done unto himself. "When I was hungry, (saith he,) you fed me⁸; Call the poor and needy, they cannot recompense you⁹, but you shall not want recompence in the resurrection of the just." If this may not move us to be charitable and show mercy, good Lord, what may, in a world wherein the

⁵ Luke xii. 20.

⁶ Luke xvi. 9.

⁷ Luke xvi. 23.

⁸ Matt. xxv. 35.

⁹ Luke xiv. 14.

custom of giving is almost out of custom? Whence is it, (saith Nazianzene¹), that we live, that we know God, that we look for another world, and joys in the same? Who hath granted us to look up and behold the heavens, the circle of the moon, the multitude of the stars? Who hath given us the course of times and seasons; the spacious air, the showers, fruits, meats, mansions, laws, ordinances to contain us within the bonds of civil society? Who hath given us lands, hereditaments, cattle, goods, possessions? but even he who would have us merciful unto others as himself hath been merciful unto us? and therefore, to conclude with the same father, O man, give somewhat unto man; nay, give something unto God, that thou mayest show thyself thankful unto God. We give straws and stubble², he precious stones; we a cup of cold water³, he the fountain of the water of life⁴; we two mites, he the whole treasure of the temple: we show mercy, saith St. Augustin⁵, for if we remember ourselves and our distressed estate once in Adam, we cannot forget we were in great misery, yea, plunged into many miseries.

¹ Naz. de paup. amandis.

² 1 Cor. iii. 12.

³ Matt. x. 42.

⁴ John iv. 14.

⁵ Aug. Serm. 3. de Nat.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the great meekness of the Son of God, in bearing the reproaches of the world; which may be an instruction unto us of suffering the like patiently.

IN all discomforts of the world we learn by this to comfort ourselves, when we call to mind that Christ and we are partners; and that he hath vouchsafed to make us (unworthy that we are) his fellow-sufferers; of which suffering of his, how great that was which he showed with all meekness in bearing the reproaches of the Jews, the Prophet doth specify. "They rendered me evil for good, and hatred for my good will."⁶ And here consider we together both the one and the other; when he did miracles, they said he was a sorcerer; when he cast out devils, they said it was done by the black art or power of the devil⁷; when he reprov'd sinners, they said he was a seducer⁸; when he received sinners, they said he was a friend and favourer of them⁹; when he healed the sick, they said he was a breaker of the sabbath. What and how many unjust contumelies endured he of the Pharisees¹⁰, who sometimes cast him

⁶ Ps. xxxv. 12.

⁷ John viii. 48.

⁸ Luke xxiii. 14.

⁹ Luke xv. 1.

¹⁰ Luke iv. 29.

out of the city, accused him of blasphemy¹, cried out upon him that he was a man not worthy to live amongst them!² Reading the Evangelists, we shall find, that all this Christ patiently put up with at his adversaries' hands, and railed not again, but was a lamb before the shearer, as the prophet Isaiah speaketh.³

2. Come we to his passion, and what heart is able to conceive the mild suffering of the Son of God! There shall we see his head full of thorns, his eyes full of tears, his mouth full of gall, his ears full of contumelies⁴, his heart full of sorrows⁵; and amidst all, himself praying for his persecutors; there is he derided and scorned, Come down from the cross, if thou be the Son of God. "Whence, (saith Gregory⁶), if Christ, when he was reproached, had come down from the cross, giving place to those who insulted over him, where had the virtue of patience been? he expecteth awhile, suffereth a little reproaches

¹ John x. 36.

² Matt. xxvii. 22.

³ Isa. liii. 7.

⁴ Mark xv. 30.

⁵ Matt. xxvii. 46.

⁶ Si tunc descendisset, nimirum insultantibus cedens, virtutem patientiæ non ostendisset; expectavit paululum, toleravit opprobria, irrisiones sustinuit, patientiam servavit, distulit admirationem; et qui de cruce descendere noluit, de sepulchro resurrexit: plus igitur est de sepulchro surgere, quam de cruce descendere; plus fuit mortem resurgendo destruere, quam vitam descendendo *servare*.

and derisions that were offered him; and he that would not come down from the cross, rose up from the sepulchre; and that was a greater matter to arise from the sepulchre, than to come down from the cross; to destroy death by rising, than to save life by descending." Of whose patience also Cyprian⁷ speaking, saith, Oh how humbly did he give place to his persecutors! how quietly bare he the reproaches offered! He was crowned with thorns, to crown martyrs with glory; he was fed with gall, to give us manna from heaven; he was loaded with reproaches, to make us without blame.

In the ninth of St. Luke⁸, when his disciples would have had him call for fire from heaven, as Elias did, he answered them meekly, "You know not of what spirit you are," or you cannot discern between spirit and spirit; that of the Old Testament, and this of the New; that of requiring punishment upon our enemies, this of forgiving them. In the Gospel by St. John⁹ we read, for all that the people a little before were ready to stone him, yet Christ goes by-and-by to teach and instruct them, as if he clean forgot any wrong at all intended against him; and was so far from hurting them that never ceased

⁷ Cypr. de bono patient.

⁸ Luke ix. 54.

⁹ John xi. 8.

to revile him, as he made his prayers even upon the cross for them, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."¹

3. If ever we call our best attention to observe, then let us do it in observing Christ's patience in bearing the reproaches of the world, seeing we live not without some contumelies amongst men; for howsoever we live we may look for no other. The people, though Moses² did never so much entreat for them, yet they stung him with their tongues; but God stung them for it with the tongues of fiery serpents. Joseph (saith St. Ambrose³) had two great troubles at once, the one was temptation, the other calumnation; the temptation he overcame, but the calumnation was sorrowful for the time. David⁴ had many hard words when Shimei did curse him; David bears all, and bethinks himself if this were not a chastisement sent from God. Fulgentius, a reverend prelate, being much injured by some Arians⁵, when he was willed to convict these malicious men before the magistrate, No, quoth he, I refer my cause to another tribunal. Tertullian sheweth how the Christians bare with admirable patience all reproaches; and Cyprian⁶ saith, that their prayers were, that those who per-

¹ Luke xxiii. 34.

² Ambros. de Joseph.

³ In Vita B. Fulg.

⁴ Numb. xxi. 5.

⁵ 2 Sam. xvi. 7.

⁶ Cypr. ad Demetr.

secuted them for a time, might at last come to the knowledge of God, and so rejoice with them for ever.

Thus after the example of Christ have the godly endured the hard usage of the world. Though the seas rage, and the waves beat against the rock, they hurt not the rock, but are themselves turned into froth. Mention is made of those who write the natures of things, that the herb Dyanton, though you throw water never so often upon it, you shall notwithstanding ever find it dry. The waters of tribulation may be poured out upon the patient, but they are evermore the same. When certain heathen men asked a Christian, What fruit he had by Christ? Is not this fruit, said he, not to be moved at your reproaches offered?

4. In this case men must refer all to God, —“If thou hold thy peace, God speaketh for thee⁷,” and if God speak for thee, it shall be better than thou canst speak for thyself. Christ willed the man that was cured to carry his bed⁸, and as he carried his bed, he carried reproaches too, who being a diseased man, lay without any one grudging against him at all; as neither the blind man⁹, nor his parents were ever troubled of the Jews

⁷ Si tu tacueris, Deus loquitur. ⁸ John v. 8.

⁹ John ix. 18, 19.

while he continued in his blindness. Job¹, a just man, complained that he was a companion of scorpions. The prophet David sheweth that his enemies had sharpened their tongues like swords. God remove envy from the minds of Christian men! for it is a diabolical vice, and bringeth forth malicious contumelies; and the enemy of man hath his name² of accusing, or speaking ill of others. In the law it is said, "Thou shalt not curse, or speak evil of any deaf man³;" and what else is he whom thou defamest in his absence?

The leper was kept up seven days⁴, that none should unadvisedly say he was a leper, without trial; nay, he must be kept up seven other days, that it might plainly appear whether it were so or no; to show, it must be long before we censure others. They were the wicked Philistines that pulled out Samson's eyes⁵, to mock and scoff at blind Samson. It was the speech of the proud Pharisee, "I am not as that publican⁶;" and yet a fancy is crept into the minds of many to discourse of their own profession, and to discover other men's faults; like some kind of flies, that if there be any sore part in a

¹ Job xxx. 29.

² The word Diabolus (or Devil) means an accuser, or calumniator.—Ed.

³ Aug. de doct. Chris. Leviticus xix. 14.

⁴ Lev. xiii. 26. ⁵ Judg. xvi. 25. ⁶ Luke xviii. 11.

sound body, there they light; but let these remember the malediction of Ham⁷, and the curse that came upon the mockers of Elisha⁸, and the reproof of the Apostle, "Why dost thou judge thy brother?"⁹ much more, speakest evil of him?

5. Trees well rooted bear all storms, and good men know how to bear the reproaches of the world. "A good conscience at home, is not so much moved with rumours abroad," saith St. Ambrose.¹⁰ The wind doth not carry up and down the massy wheat, but the light chaff. We cannot better bestow our patience, than upon rebukes; or more show how we have profited in the school of Christ, than by enduring evil sayings against us. The three children walked up and down the fiery flames, praising God.¹¹ The apology of the righteous man is, "Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee?"¹² Truth (saith Tertulian) is a stranger in earth, where it hath many enemies, and but few friends.

6. In the meantime, when thou seest the master of the house himself called Beelzebub, why complainest thou of being injured and maligned? Let God be God, and do as seems him best in bringing us to heaven.

⁷ Gen. ix. 22. ⁸ 2 Kings ii. 24. ⁹ Rom. xiv. 10.

¹⁰ Bene sibi conscius.—*Ambros. de Officiis.*

¹¹ Dan. iii. 25.

¹² Ps. lxxiii. 25.

Behold the Son of God, when false witnesses came in against him, how he was silent, and spake never a word. Hast thou been stricken? Christ received first many strokes. Art thou mocked? so was he of the soldiers, and Herod's servants. Art thou betrayed of thy friend? so was he of his own disciple. Art thou falsely accused? so was he who was innocence itself. O ye slow of heart, saith our Saviour to his disciples, know you not that he must suffer these things? speaking of the Messias to come.

7. Whereas the vulgar text hath, "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand¹," for "the chiefest among ten thousand," some translations say, "Having under his banner an army of ten thousand." This whiteness is purity; this ruddiness, his passions; the ten thousands under his banners, the faithful that followed him. In the law², the goat that must go into the wilderness, must first be presented unto the priest, who, laying his hands upon the head of the goat, and confessing the sins of the people, the goat forthwith must wander in the desert. Upon him the iniquities of us all were laid. We know, how he wandered in the desert of this world; we are not ignorant what reproaches he endured amongst men. And we may

¹ Cant. v. 10.

² Lev. xvi. 22.

not look for other, but to endure sometime the hard censure of the world, which is for the most part ready to interpret all for the worst. If any be humble, he is an hypocrite ; if of a plain meaning, he is of no capacity ; if merry, he is dissolute ; if silent, he is melancholy ; if he labour to do good, he seeks praise ; if he will not flatter, he is proud ; if he give little, niggardly ; if much, prodigal ; if he by mildness exhort men, he is but lukewarm ; if he have friends, he is praised ; if enemies, pursued. So whatsoever he doth, he must have now and then at least some censure or other.

St. Paul saith³, (as hath been shown,) that he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, and even so is it now, saith the Apostle. What this persecution was, Moses telleth us⁴: no other, but that Ishmael was mocking Isaac. Whence we see that mocking and speaking evil is a kind of persecution, which we should suffer, saith St. Peter, and why ? " Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was there any guile found in his mouth ; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again."⁵

³ Gal. iv. 29.

⁴ Gen. xxi. 9.

⁵ 1 Pet. ii. 23.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of Christ's most mild and peaceable conversation amongst men, which is our Christian direction for passing our time in this world.

FATHERS are much delighted when they see in their children and offspring the feature of themselves. When we are humble and meek, we bear a shadow and resemblance of him who was and is the mirror of all meekness. Moses¹ was the mildest man amongst the children of men, yet far inferior to the Son of God, whose angelical life in the world was such as all the world may admire. "Behold," (saith Zachariah,) "thy king cometh in meek manner."² And Isaiah saith, "He shall not quench the smoking flax, or break the bruised reed."³ When the angel Gabriel brought message from heaven concerning his conception and birth, the angel came to Nazareth, which signifieth a flower. Convenient was it that Christ, so odoriferous a flower, should be conceived at Nazareth, which signifieth a flower, and thereto, of a virgin, so pure a flower; and then too, when the spring began,

¹ Numb. xii. 3.

² Zech. ix. 9.

³ Isai. xlii. 3.

a time of flowers. Christ was a flower, for the seemliness of his conversation, for the sweet savour of his love, for the fruit of his passion. This flower began to grow in his conception, to put forth in his birth, to flourish in his peaceable and holy conversation. This flower withered for a time in his passion, but reflowered more oriently in his resurrection. If thou wilt gather this flower, follow the steps of his sweet and peaceable conversation. If thou wilt have the operation hereof, apply unto thy faith the comfortable savour of his passion.

2. The prophet Isaiah, in the person of Christ, saith, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he hath anointed me, and sent me, to show peace."⁴ This was spoken long before he came.

Now, when was he born but in the reign of Augustus?⁵ (which, as histories show, was a time of peace;) his doctrine that should be taught in the world, the Apostle calleth the Gospel of peace⁶; his messengers are said to be the messengers of peace, and he himself is called the Prince of peace.⁷

To omit the great reconciliation made between God and man, (wherein he was,—a peace-maker only?—no, our peace itself⁸;)

⁴ Isaiah lxi. 2.

⁵ Luke ii. 1.

⁶ Ephes. vi. 15.

⁷ Isaiah ix. 6.

⁸ Ephes. ii. 14.

and to come a little to his conversation, (which was so peaceable, as in the avoiding of offences in the world, he did many things, and exhorted his disciples to do the same, specially for the conservation of peace.) When the blessed Virgin began a little to expostulate the matter with him, for losing himself (as she thought) in Jerusalem, he mildly answereth her, "That he must go about his Father's business."¹

When Peter drew out his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear, Christ cured the servant, and parted the fray with a peaceable admonition, "Peter, put up thy sword."² When the feast came that all went to Jerusalem, Christ stayed a little behind, but for conformity's sake, he shortly followeth after.³ "Peter, are the children free? Yes, Lord. Yet go, Peter⁴; that we may offend nobody, go pay custom for thee and me."

3. Merciful Lord, how mild a conversation was this! The apostles were sorry when they heard him tell that he should shortly depart from them⁵: and so might they well be, respecting the great benefit they had by his presence: if they were fearful, he strengthened

¹ Luke ii. 49.

² Luke xxii. 51.

³ John vii. 10.

⁴ Matt. xvii. 27.

⁵ John xiv. 1.

them : if ignorant, he instructed them ; when they were moved to wrath, he appeased them ; when he saw they were sorrowful, he comforted them ; when he foresaw their troubles in the world, he prayed for them ; if at any time they were doubtful what to do, he directed them ; when they did well, he praised them : in a word, he governed them as a father, counselled them as a friend, taught them as a master, and in all his conversation was so fellow-like with them, so peaceable, as he won their hearts, both to love and fear him.

4. For other sorts of men, as first the Pharisees themselves, he would not refuse to eat with them, as he did not to eat in the house of one of the chief of them.⁶ When Nicodemus came unto him, he entered a familiar colloquy with him concerning regeneration, how he should be born again from above⁷ : When another questioned with him of the chiefest commandment in the law, he showed him the sum of the law and the prophets to consist in this, "That we love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourself."⁸ For the inferior sort of people, the publicans themselves, which were of all others most out of grace with the world, when they resorted

⁶ Luke xiv. 1.

⁷ John iii. 2.

⁸ Matt. xxii. 35.

unto him, he received them¹; nay, when he saw Zaccheus, one of the chief of them, but desirous to see him, he would go and abide with him²: What shall we say? how meekly he sate upon the ground talking with a poor woman of Samaria!³ comforting another woman which was much abashed, after he did inquire who had touched the hem of his garment, saying, "Go, thy faith hath made thee whole!"⁴ took in good part the box of ointment at her hands⁵, who thought it well bestowed had it been the most precious in the world, upon so precious a body! all which show how mildly, how peaceably he lived amongst men in the world.

5. Now by this example of our Saviour, we learn to apply ourselves to peace and unity, when we see that he who could have called legions of angels in a moment to avenge him of his enemies, would notwithstanding quietly remit all⁶: he who was Lord of heaven and earth, would notwithstanding converse in sociable manner with the meanest of men: he who was freed from the law, would notwithstanding, for conformity's sake, as otherwise for the fulfilling thereof, show all obedience to the law.

Christ was not one of those crossing and

¹ Luke xv. 2.

² John iv. 21.

⁵ Mark xiv. 2.

² Luke xix. 5.

⁴ Matt. ix. 22.

⁶ Matt. xxvi. 53.

tossing dispositions who will live and die in a strange mood of contradiction. Poor sheep will live peaceably together, and men by unnatural bitterness seek the ruin oftentimes each of other. A heathen emperor forbade a couple of troublesome fellows to take upon them any more the name of Christians. These of all other should live peaceably within themselves: First, because Christian men are members of one body, and members are joined together, and members suffer together, rejoice together. Secondly, for that they are heirs of one hope, which is to be partakers of the kingdom of heaven. Should an Hebrew smite an Hebrew? Did the angels in the Apocalypse fight against angels?⁷ No.

6. Christ restraining the letter of the law, which permitted the hating of our enemies, saith, "Whosoever shall say unto his brother, Raca⁸," which word signifieth a mind set upon revenge and trouble, "shall be in danger," saith he, "of a council;" as if he would have our very passions pacified, and therefore also our implacable humours, our cholerick and hasty motions, ever fretting and frowning and set upon revenge: which make men in a heat and rage become furious, and in a manner (saith Cassianus) mad men.⁹ This was far from his

⁷ Rev. xii. 7.

⁸ Matt. v. 22.

⁹ *Cass. de spirit. iracund.*

manners, from his spirit, on whom the Holy Ghost came in the similitude of a dove¹, which dove doth signify the quality of gentleness and peace. God never dwelleth anywhere but in the house of peace, where his Spirit taketh up residence as in his proper mansion.

7. This considered, we see how much it concerneth the condition of Christian men to be given to peace, and to pass their time in this world in withdrawing themselves from contentious desires. O happy life, void of continual storms, which being far from boiling envy, and restless desire of revenge, and setting nought by the vain pleasures of this world, can sit down in a calm and quiet contemplation of God.

Stories make mention of Cato, as this—after the age of five-and-fifty years, he left Rome, and withdrew himself to a little village nigh to Picen, there he passed the residue of his life, for the most part accompanied with his books, only sometimes he would go and labour in the fields and vineyards near adjoining: being on a time forth, one comes and writes with a coal upon his door, “O Cato, thou only knowest how to live.”² The like is said of Scipio Africanus: in the greatest wars he enterprised, he never lost battle; and yet

¹ Matt. iii. 16.

² Cato, tu solus scis vivere.

he made war in Asia, Europe, and Africa, sacked Carthage: when age came on, he betook him to a quiet and peaceable kind of life, and therein passed the rest of his days, esteeming that course of life more commendable than any other.

Now if heathen men have so much addicted themselves unto peace, what should they do whom God hath called to a calling of peace, and therein to serve him truly all the days of their life?

8. This notwithstanding, when the cause is just, the authority lawful, the intent good, that God may be glorified, a right continued, and imminent dangers avoided, it is and may be lawful for Christians to take arms; and so to do is nothing contrary (as some have dreamed) to Christian peace. God hath assisted just war. The cry of the people was, "The sword of the Lord, and the sword of Gideon."³ But say these men, "He that strikes with the sword, shall die with the sword"⁴: and Vengeance is mine, I will revenge⁵: indeed in the Old Testament it was true, Gird thy sword upon thy thigh⁶: but in the New it is, Put up thy sword: then the people entered into Canaan by weapons, but we into heaven without sword or shield,

³ Judg. vii. 20.

⁴ Matt. xxvi. 51.

⁵ Rom. xii. 19.

⁶ Psal. xlv. 3.

and therefore in no case we admit war amongst Christians." True indeed (saith St. Austin) a war is of necessity, peace is voluntary¹, and of the two our Christian desires tend rather to peace, for war is no blessing, but a punishment: but yet the premises observed, then "Go and strike Amalek," but in any case, let not the desire of superiority be the cause.

To answer the fancy of those men before mentioned: he which strikes with the sword, whose condition is private, may feel the stroke of the sword. To take vengeance in a cause of justice is appertaining properly unto the public magistrate; and so much do those testimonies of holy scripture infer.

For the lawfulness of war, the practice of Constantine (who by the assistance of God prospered herein and prevailed against Maxentius²; not so much in multitude, strength, or knowledge, as by the divine assistance) doth manifest the same; yet ever so, as Christians rather desire peace and deliverance from the disturbance, either of defensive, but most specially of unnecessary and ostensive wars; that they may serve God in a peaceable manner all the days of their life, that there be no leading into captivity, nor no complaining in their streets. "Happy are the people (saith

¹ *Bellum necessitas, pacem voluntas.*—*Aug.* 107. *a Bonifac. contr. fau.* lib. xxii.

² *Euseb.* lib. 8. *de vita Const.*

the Prophet) that are in such a case: yea, blessed are the people whose God is the Lord."³

When the building of the material temple began to go forward, all Israel came together as one man⁴: when the spiritual temple began now to be erected, of the believers there was but one heart⁵: O that peace and unity might so prevail, that once Christ's last departure from the world might be remembered: "My peace I leave unto you."⁶ Let this be Christians' rule: enmity with the serpent, at unity within ourselves. If we will needs be crossing, would to God we would cross our evil affections, which are too ready to move us upon every light occasion to revenge, to be passionate, and to infame any that hath a show of honesty. "Have peace with man: be at war (if thou wilt be at war) with thine own vices."

The oblations of the peaceable man are as Abel's were, acceptable unto God: wherefore for all unquiet passions, for all ambitious motions, for all hasty desire of revenge amongst us Christians, may that of the Apostle be applied: "I would to God they were cut off that trouble us."⁷

Sweet is the life that is free from boiling

³ Ps. cxliv. 14, 15.

⁴ Ezra iii. 1.

⁵ Acts iv. 32.

⁶ John xiv. 27.

⁷ Gal. v. 12.

envy, that beareth misery and hideth the same, that neither waxeth proud in prosperity, nor is too much cast down with adversity, but with that tranquillity of mind, which is wont to thank God for all, passeth along peaceably to eternal happiness. While Solomon reigned, there was peace in Israel; while the grace of God doth rule and reign in our hearts, there is peace and unity in our lives.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the name of Jesus.

JESUS is in Hebrew interpreted Saviour, a name attributed unto the Son of God, "A name had in much honour (saith Eusebius) amongst the old patriarchs¹;" a name brought from heaven by the angel Gabriel²; for though in the old law, others had the appellation of this name, as Joshua the son of Nun³, and the high priests which came forth with the people after their captivity⁴; yet had they their names no way comparable to this: The pro-

¹ Euseb. lib. i. c. 5.

² Josh. i. 1.

³ Matt. i. 21.

⁴ Zech. iii. 3.

phet Isaiah saith, "Thou shalt be called by a new name, as the mouth of God shall name thee."⁵ A new name according to a new redemption. For those others to whom this name was given, had it of men at the time of their circumcision, this was given of God before the conception: In their names was included the saving of some multitude of people from bodily captivity, but in this, of saving his people from their sins. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus;" O sweet name! who is so deaf that his ears are not filled with pleasant music, when he heareth the name of Jesus? Who is so dead, that hath not his senses raised with delight when he remembereth the message of the angel, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus?" "This name Jesus (saith St. Bernard) is honey in the mouth, harmony in the ear, melody in the heart⁶:" "This name Jesus (saith Anselm) is a name of comforting sinners, when they call upon him;" therefore himself [Anselm] saith, "Jesus, be my Jesus."⁷ This name is above all names, First, for that it was consecrated from everlasting; secondly, for that it was given of God; thirdly, for that it was desired of the patriarchs; fourthly, for that it was foretold of the prophets; fifthly, for that it was accom-

⁵ Isai. lxiii. 2.

⁶ Bern. in Cant. ser. xv.

⁷ Jesus, *esto mihi Jesus.*

plished in the time of grace, magnified of the apostles, witnessed of the martyrs ; acknowledged and honoured shall it be of all believers unto the world's end.

2. The name of Jesus is a name of intercession : " Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name¹:" and therefore may that of the prophet be remembered, " Not unto us, Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the praise²;" If God did so much for Abraham's, for Moses', and David's sake, what shall he do for Jesus' sake ?

This name Jesus is a name of power, for in this name the apostles gave strength unto the weak, health unto the sick, and wrought many other great miracles. " Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the world!"³

This name Jesus is a name of invocation, not only in a time of distress, while we are living, to say with the blind man, " Jesu, thou son of David, have mercy upon me⁴;" but with the blessed martyr St. Stephen, when we are dying, to call upon him, " Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."⁵ And to this effect, that of the prophet Joel may be remembered, " Who-soever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."⁶ Of this name the apostles

¹ John xiv. 13.

² Ps. viii. 1.

³ Acts vii. 59.

⁴ Ps. cxv. 1.

⁵ Luke xviii. 38.

⁶ Joel ii. 32.

rejoiced, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for it⁷; of this name all Christians throughout the world exulted, and gave high reverence unto the same.

3. But how is it that at the hearing of other names of God, as Elohim, Eloah, El, Eli, Eliou, Jehovah, Jah, Adonai, Shaddai, Zebaoth, which signify his name, essence, power, omnipotency, we are not so much moved? "And at this name Jesus (the Apostle saith) every knee shall bow⁸," not only the knees of our heart (which at this name should bow and bend indeed) but every knee: the Apostle goeth further, saying, "Of things both in heaven and earth, and under the earth:" but why at this name of God above other? Because this name cost much when it was bought by the blood, by the honour, by the life of the Son of God himself; and seeing it cost such a price, we ought with all reverence to be thankful for it: He humbled himself in procuring it, and we therefore in receiving it.

Jesus a Saviour, therefore God. It is the property of a Saviour, first, to encounter with the enemy; secondly, to help with counsel and doctrine; thirdly, to give strength; fourthly, not to save once, but ever; fifthly, not one, but many; sixthly, not for a time,

⁷ Acts. v. 41.

⁸ Phil. ii. 10.

but for ever ; all which our Lord Jesus hath fully accomplished.

4. Is any fallen into distrust ? Let him call upon the name of Jesus : Is any in adversity ? "Call upon me," may well be applied to the help of Jesus. He that came to redeem captives, and help the distressed, most convenient was it that he should have a name answerable thereunto. "For names (saith Isidore¹) were given of old according unto the properties of the persons named." And therefore Abraham was so named, because he should be the father of many nations. Esau rough, because such were his manners, and actions, and conditions. Ahishahar², brother of mourning, because such were his passions. Aristarchus³, a right and good governor, who was companion to St. Paul. And so, to omit many other, we see names were given to express the principal properties of those who were named, and therefore this name Jesus, a name of saving, of which the Apostle saith, "There is no other name given under heaven, wherein we may be saved."⁴ The blind man said, in the ninth of St. John, "The man that is called Jesus, did so and so unto me."⁵ Festus, speaking

¹ Isid. lib. vii. Etym. cap. 7.

² 1 Chron. vii. 10.

³ Acts xxii. 2.

⁴ Acts iv. 12.

⁵ John ix. 11.

of St. Paul's doctrine and the sum thereof, "It is," saith he, "of one Jesus, who was dead, and Paul affirmed to be alive."⁶ Yea, Festus, this one Jesus was he, before whom thou, and all the rulers of the world, should fall down, in hope of the salvation of your souls.

5. "In this name (saith St. John, when he saith "for his name's sake") are our sins forgiven us⁷:" "And they circumcised the child the eighth day, and called his name Jesus."⁸ The child! what humility was here, when so high a Lord accepted so small a name! They called his name (not gave him this name) Jesus, a Saviour, the name once of him who first brought the Jews out of bondage; but now the name of him who delivered both Jews and Gentiles, all that believe on him, from the spiritual bondage of that rueful Pharaoh, the prince of darkness, whose power the Lord Jesus hath quelled and clean discomfited. We read in the Gospel, that the evil spirits did shake and tremble at the presence of Jesus; and assuredly his very name is a terror; and men of experience and good proof can in this case affirm as much, how the blessed name of Jesus hath most effectually moved in times of distress.

⁶ Acts xxv. 19.

⁷ 1 John ii. 12.

⁸ Luke ii. 21.

6. In the old law Jesus was the expectation of nations, but in the new law Jesus is the salvation of the nations ; and therefore if at any time we have lost him, what should we but with Mary and Joseph seek Jesus sorrowing ? “ O sweet Saviour (saith St. Bernard), if thou wert not found amongst thy own kindred, how should I look to find thee amongst my kindred ? ”¹ But what are we without Jesus ? And therefore, how should we seek him ! When Jesus is present, all is well, nothing seemeth difficult ; but when Jesus is absent, all is hard and uneasy ; when Jesus speaketh not inwardly, vile is all consolation ; but when Jesus speaks one word only, there is felt great comfort. Did not Mary Magdalen straight arise from the place whereon she wept, when Martha said unto her, “ The Master cometh and calleth for thee ? ” Happy honour when Jesus calleth from tears to the joy of the Spirit. How dry and hard art thou without Jesus ! How foolish and vain if thou covetest any thing without Jesus ! Is not this greater loss, than if thou hadst lost the whole world ? What can the world bestow without Jesus ? To be without Jesus is a grievous hell, and to be with Jesus is a sweet paradise. If Jesus be with thee, no enemy

¹ Si non inventus es inter cognatos tuos, quomodo inveniam te inter cognatos meos ?

can hurt thee; if Jesus be from thee, no friend can help thee; he is most poor that liveth without Jesus, and he most rich who is well with Jesus.

It is great art to know how to be conversant with Jesus, and wisdom to learn how to possess him: be humble and at peace, and Jesus will be with thee: be devout and quiet, and Jesus will continue with thee: thou mayest drive Jesus away, and lose his grace, if thou decline to external things: and if thou hast lost him, to whom wilt thou fly? What friend wilt thou seek? Without a friend thou canst not long continue: and if Jesus be not thy friend before all, thou wilt be heavy and desolate. Thou dost therefore foolishly, if thou repose or rejoice in any other. We ought rather to have all the world our enemy, than to offend Jesus: wherefore of all things dear unto thee, let Jesus be especially beloved. All things are loved for Jesus, and Jesus for himself: for him, and in him, let all be alike unto thee. See thou never desire to be praised and loved singularly, for this appertaineth only to Jesus, who hath not his equal: neither let another possess thee, or dwell in thine heart; but let Jesus be wholly in thee, and in every good man. Be pure, and at inward liberty, and without the implicatures of the world; it behoveth thee so to

be, if thou wilt bare thy heart to Jesus, and see how sweet the Lord is.

7. Finally, thou oughtest not to be cast down by any adversity, but patiently to endure all that shall happen unto thee, remembering the sweet name of Jesus, to which thou mayest fly as to a city of refuge¹; after winter cometh summer, after the darkness of the night followeth the cheerful day. Put thy trust in Jesus, and thou shalt never fail. "Whatsoever we do (saith the apostle) let us do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks." In the name of Jesus, must be the beginning²: By the help of Jesus, must be the prosecuting: To the praise of Jesus, must be the concluding of all our doings and sayings whatsoever.

8. The name Jesus! O glorious and venerable name! This name is carried as a light before the Gentiles, which hath the effect of true light; for at the appearing hereof, the clouds of sorrow, and mists of discomfort, do soon vanish from the distressed soul. What a joyful hearing is that, "Your sins are forgiven you in his name!"³ And therefore it seems to bring with it a cleansing virtue in respect of the blot, a sanctifying virtue in

¹ Deut. iv. 43.

² Col. iii. 17.

³ 1 John ii. 12.

respect of the fault, a justifying virtue in respect of the guilt, a saving virtue in respect of all.

Christ had this name given him in his circumcision, and we in our regeneration have the benefit of this name. The joy that doth redound unto us by this name, appeareth by that of the prophet, respecting the person of Christ. "He hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Both above thy fellows, and for thy fellows, with the oil of gladness.⁴ Fitly (saith St. Bernard⁵) is the name of Jesus resembled unto oil. For first the quality of the oil is, it anointeth and suppleth; secondly, it cherisheth; thirdly, it giveth light: so doth this name of Jesus: it anointeth and suppleth the hardness of our hearts; it cherisheth the weakness of our faith; it enlighteneth the actions of our life. A fourth property of oil is laid down by the psalmist, "It maketh man to have a cheerful countenance⁶:" so doth this name: it makes man cheerfully to look up to heaven, and have access with hope (as the apostle saith) to the throne of grace.

9. The Lord of righteousness according to

⁴ Ps. xlv. 7.

⁵ Bern. vol. iii. p. 540. The Treatise here referred to is not considered to be the genuine work of Bernard.
—Ed.

⁶ Ps. civ. 15.

his human nature was called Christ; but Jesus according to his divine nature had other names, as sometimes he is called a shepherd¹ which watcheth his flock, a captain which fought for his army, a prince which governeth his people², but all was included in this name Jesus, in saving them from their sins. Sometimes he is compared unto bread³, for that he strengtheneth; to light⁴, that he illuminateth; to a door⁵, by which men do enter; to a rock, upon which they may build; and many other divine resemblances, but the name Jesus surmounts them all; it strengtheneth, it lighteneth, it is the door whereby we may enter, the rock whereupon we build, and lay the foundation of our faith: it moves us to believe, to love, to invoke. O blessed name! When Leah brought forth her fourth son, she said, "Call this child Judah: and give praise unto the Lord."⁶ O call this name Judah, and never cease to give praises unto God. Philip, king of Macedon, rejoiced that he had then a son born, when there was an Aristotle to instruct him; but let the Christian man a thousand times more rejoice, that he had then being and believing, when there was a Jesus to save him, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

¹ John x. 11. 14.² Isa. ix. 6.³ John vi. 35.⁴ John i. 5.⁵ John x. 7.⁶ Gen. xxix. 35.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of Christ's teaching his Disciples to pray, and the tenor of that form of prayer, so often to be used of all devout Christians.

THREE principal exercises are there of our Christian piety, which are alms, fasting, and prayer. These three are special medicines, to cure our evils past, to help and drive away those that are present, and to prevent such as are to come.

Alms and fasting, as two wings, cause our prayers to soar upward: Yet (saith St. Austin) we see that all cannot give alms, for that some labour with want; nor all cannot fast, for some are faint by reason of nature's imbecility; but all may pray, if not with sound of words, yet with the affection of the mind, according to that of the prophet, "Lord, my sighings are not hid from thee." Those many specialties of the dove in the Canticles do show the same, which is wont in sighing to sing, and in singing to sigh.

2. Wonderful was the providence of Almighty God, in ordering all things that did appertain unto the tabernacle⁷; there was not any particular thing about it, but an express

⁷ Exod. xxxix. 9—13.

form was set down for the direction thereof: now we have not a material ark or tabernacle, (for these were shadows of things to come,) but we have the worship of God and all things appertaining unto the same, enjoined us. Christ our Saviour hath set all things in order about this tabernacle; and first of all concerning our first sacrifice here to be offered, that is to say, prayer: concerning which he layeth down many circumstances, as by the prayer of the publican, to pray with humility; by the parable of the widow¹, to pray with importunacy; by his commendation of the woman of Canaan, to pray with fervency²; by his refuting the Pharisees for their desire to be seen praying³, to pray secretly in our chambers; and other such like directions for prayer. Whereby we may see that our devotion is no bye matter, whereabout the Son of God is long instructing us.

3. Now Christ beginneth to teach his disciples a form of prayer: When you pray, pray after this manner, "Our Father," and so forth. Surely a most divine form of prayer above all other in the world, and so much the more excellent, by how much the more the Author thereof is above men and angels. St. Austin calleth it, "a prayer of prayers⁴;"

¹ Luke xviii. 13. 45.

² Matt. vi. 6.

³ Matt. xv. 28.

⁴ Aug. Ser. ii. post Pentec.

Tertullian, "a Breviary of our faith."⁵ "O what prayer (saith St. Cyprian) is more gracious with the Father, than that which is delivered unto us of the Son?"⁶ and how comfortably may we pray, when we do not only use his name to countenance our prayers, but even his own words, which direct us in praying! And here we may observe, that Christ setteth down a prescript form of prayer, to show unto us that our prayers should not run upon indigested words, and senseless tautologies, as many unwisely have dreamed of voluntary praying, which doth much detract from this excellent part of God's worship. In the sixth of the book of Numbers, God sets down unto the priests a direct form how to bless the people⁷: In the second of Joel⁸, the very words are mentioned which penitent sinners should use in their conversation to God: and here Christ layeth down (we see) a form of prayer, which, for division's sake, may branch itself into a proem, and seven several petitions adjoined unto the same.

When you pray, say, "Our Father, which art in heaven."

This proem may inclusively be understood at the beginning of every petition. In that Christ teacheth us to call God Father, we

⁵ Tertul. in Orat. Dom.

⁷ Numb. vi. 24, 25.

⁶ Cyprian in Orat. Dom.

⁸ Joel ii. 17.

are emboldened to make our suits unto him; lest we might say as Abraham, What be we which are but dust and ashes, to speak unto God? But when we consider him as our Father in the very beginning of our prayer, we acknowledge his bounty and grace. For, first, this name of Father is a name to move us to come unto him. The wandering son said, "I will go to my father."¹ Secondly, it is a name of privilege; he hath given us (saith the Apostle) his Spirit whereby we cry, "Abba, Father."² Thirdly, it is a name of providence, "Your heavenly Father careth for you."³ But how come we by this, to call God by a name of love, of privilege, of providence? Surely, he that willed us to call him Father, hath made him our Father. He hath given us "power to become the sons of God."⁴ O see what great love he hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God! Why, in the old law, God is called by the name of a Lord, "I the Lord;" there his people are called servants: now, from the name of Lord he is called Father; his people, from servants are become sons; and all in Christ. "I ascend to my Father and your Father."⁵

¹ Luke xv. 18.² Rom. viii. 15.³ Matt. vi. 26.⁴ John i. 12.⁵ John xx. 17.

Now, calling God Father, as it is a name of dignity, (for it is thought to go well with children of a rich and loving Father,) so is it a name of duty; and as he hath the properties of a father, so should we have of children, which is to honour, to serve, to love, to obey; lest it be said, as it was once of some, "I have nursed children, and they have rebelled against me."⁶

4. Now, as we say "Father," so say we "Ours;" as if, when we pray, we pray all in one, (saith St. Cyprian,) Our Father. Let not the rich, or mighty, despise the poor; it pleaseth Christ to have us all together to call God our Father, and therefore none ought to disdain other; and as we say our Father, so in that we mention him to be in heaven, we confess what manner of Father he is, to wit, heavenly; and that we be not degenerate children, we should be heavenly too.

"In heaven!" what more powerful than to have a Father in heaven? In heaven! and, therefore, howsoever we are distressed on earth, the comfort is, we have a Father in heaven. In heaven! and, therefore, if our Father be in heaven, then is our inheritance in heaven. In heaven! and, therefore, praying, we lift up our eyes unto the hills⁷, as the prophet speaketh. In heaven! not as placing

⁶ Isa. i. 2.

⁷ Ps. cxxi. 1.

his divine power only there, which filleth heaven and earth ; but we say in heaven, because there chiefly his glory doth show itself ; there he blesseth the saints and angels. Well, then, (saith St. Austin,) we have a Father in heaven, let us not cleave to things here in earth.—And thus much of the poem.

5. In the first of the seven petitions we say, “Hallowed be thy name.” As beginning to pray we forget our own necessities, and make a petition for God’s glory ; we remember we have the dignity to be children, being children of such a Father, therefore by-and-by we pray for our Father’s glory, “Hallowed be thy name.” Christ sought his Father’s glory¹, and Christians seek their Father’s glory, and the hallowing of his name. It is said of the wicked, “You have polluted my name.”² Now in that we pray that God’s name should be hallowed, it is not but that God’s name was holy from everlasting ; for it is said, “Be you holy, as I am holy ;” but in this we pray that the name of God may be hallowed, both of us, and in us ; of us, when we say, Unto thy name give the praise ; in us, when we live worthy of him. Many have had a great and mighty name, but none a holy name but God ; and therefore we pray, “Hallowed be thy name ;” not

¹ John xvii. 4.

² Isa. lii. 5.

so much that we hallow it, as, "Let it be hallowed," that all Jews and infidels⁴ may honour God, that his name may be hallowed from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

6. In the second petition we are taught to pray, "Thy kingdom come," and this petition we pray (saith St. Chrysostom³) with minds lifted up. Seeing we have a Father, and a Father which hath an inheritance for us, and this inheritance is his kingdom, we therefore pray that we may once come to the enjoying hereof, saying, "Thy kingdom come." Seeing we are here in the way where all is weariness; and on the contrary side, knowing our inheritance is above, love which is impatient of delay, makes us desire the coming of this kingdom, which is the kingdom of glory. Now as there is a "kingdom of glory⁴," so is there also a "kingdom of grace."⁵ And as we do pray, bidding all earthly riches and delights, and honours farewell, for the coming of the kingdom of glory above us; so also do we pray (leaving all sinful desires) for the coming of the kingdom of grace within us, that is, that his Spirit may rule and reign in our hearts, and there have the sole pre-eminence, ruling and governing us as his subjects. And herewithal we pray, for the "kingdom of his

³ Chrys. in Orat. Dom.

⁴ Regnum gloriæ.

⁵ Regnum gratiæ.

church¹;" that whereas Christ is called a King, and his kingdom in the world is spiritual, we pray that his sceptre may sway, that all may yield obedience and faith to his government, rejecting the tyranny of the prince of darkness. And for all these severally, and together, we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

7. In the third petition we pray, "Thy will be done." This may be called a petition of duty; for seeing we expect, in time to come, a kingdom of heaven, our dutiful desire is to do his will, who gives us this kingdom, while we who shall one day receive the same kingdom remain here on earth. Like that of the Apostle, "Lord, what wilt thou that I do?"² as if he were ready to do his will who called him. And in this petition we show our obedience to his will, who willeth all things for our wealth. And here we call to mind all the commandments of the law.

"Thy will be done," that is, not our obstinate and rebellious wills, but, Lord! thy will. It is the part of the wicked (saith St. Chrysostom) to say, "We will, and we will not;" but the godly say, "Thy will be done." There is nothing either more fondly loved, or more hardly resisted, than our own wills; therefore, our desire is, that we may cross our own

¹ Pro regno Ecclesiæ suæ.

² Acts ix. 6.

wills, referring all to the will of God. And this petition we pray with a [word of comparison,] “as,” saying, “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven ;” and this doth show the ferventness of our desire to do the will of God. Those of that joyful assembly do thy will above, and we desire to do thy will beneath ; or begin for a time to do that here on earth, which thy saints and angels do for ever in heaven.

8. Because we cannot continue the doing of God’s will here on earth, without things necessary for our earthly condition, therefore, in the fourth place, we pray, “Give us this day our daily bread ;” wherein, first, we acknowledge that we wholly depend on God’s providence to receive all things necessary for the preservation of the life present ; secondly, that we crave them at his hands, when we say, “Give us,” according to that of the prophet, “Thou giving, we gather.”³ And therefore with his giving our, endeavouring, with God’s increasing Paul’s planting. “Give,” an action of liberality and love ; give us “our bread ;” our bread, not ours as due, but our bread, or the bread of us thy children, which thou art wont to bestow, and in mercy to give. “Daily bread,” or, as some say, “our supersubstantial bread.”⁴ We pray to-day,

³ Ps. cxlv. 15.

⁴ Panem supersubstantialem.

“Give us this day our daily bread,” and if we live till to-morrow, we pray the same again; as if every day we look up unto God, that he, in sending things necessary for the life present, may in mercy look down upon us. Some think this petition is poor men’s petition; no, rich and poor must pray for this bread; for, what are earthly creatures to maintain life, without his blessing, who is the author of life? Last of all, when we pray, “Give us this day our daily bread,” we pray (saith an ancient father¹) neither for riches, nor for delicacies, but for things necessary unto life; according to the wise man’s prayer², neither too much, that we do not forget God; nor too little, that we forswear him not; only a competency, and so be thankful unto the Giver of all.

9. Having begged at the hands of God things necessary for the life present; because (as the prophet Jeremiah saith³) our sins do make God take these good things from us, in the fifth place, therefore, we pray for the forgiveness of our sins, saying, “Forgive us our debts and trespasses.” Whence we may learn, that our sins are debts and trespasses; for when we sin, we run in debt, and commit trespass against God. We owe him obedience, and therefore are indebted by our sins.

¹ Chrys. in Orat. Dom.

² Prov. xxx. 8.

³ Jer. v. 25.

We do him wrong, and therefore are trespassers, when we beseech him in mercy to forgive; and, therefore, this petition is an acknowledgment or confession what we are, namely, sinners, and this we all pray (saith Cyprian) because we all sin, "Forgive us our trespasses," ours, and therefore of our own committing. We may not post off the matter as Adam did, with—"The woman thou gavest me caused me to sin¹;" whereas, indeed, the sin was his own, in giving consent. This forgiving of our sins we crave with a clause annexed, "As we forgive them that trespass against us." Whereby, first, we show of what spirit we are, in that we find in our hearts to forgive others, and therefore beseech God to forgive us. Cassianus² writeth, that some in his time would leave out this clause, as the Pelagians would have done the former, and therefore were taxed by a Council³ for this foul default. We must think, Christ taught us a most heavenly form of prayer, and impiety were it to alter the same. We must show mercy, that look for mercy, and forgive, that look for forgiveness; and therefore with charitable minds we say, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

10. When we have craved pardon for our

¹ Gen. iii. 12.

² Cass. in Orat. Dom.

³ Con. Milevit. sub. Innoc. I. Can. sept.

sins past, we begin to be careful for the time to come ; and, therefore, in the sixth petition, we pray against leading into temptation. The forgiving of our sins is a procuring of good ; the not leading into temptation, is a removing away of that which is evil.

In this petition, first, we acknowledge our own infirmity, ready to be led into temptation ; and, secondly, we pray for a preventing grace, that when temptation comes, we be not overcome of it. St. Cyprian reads it, "And lead us not, and suffer us not to be led ;" not that God doth lead us, but we rather lead ourselves, in consenting to temptations when they come, whether they be temptations of peace or persecution, afflicting or flattering : and of the two, the latter are the most dangerous. Some of the ancient fathers understood it, that in this petition we pray to be delivered from all temptations whatsoever, because we know not how soon we may fall : others, by leading into temptation, that we be not willing to consent, and be led or carried away by temptation, and so seduced. And this may be our humble petition, either for preventing temptations before they come, or when they come, that they do not prevail.

11. And this is an entrance to the seventh and last petition, "But deliver us from evil." We pray to be delivered from all evil, that

by it sometimes we fall into temptation, yet that we do not fall like the elephant, who, falling, riseth not again. Being fallen, we pray to be delivered, or to come forth. This praying to be delivered from all evil doth include all dangers both of body and soul, present or to come, that may befall ourselves or others, (when we say, Deliver us,) which we also insert in the other petition, as not praying for ourselves alone; and, praying to be delivered from all evil, we understand all mischances which may befall us by sea or land, sleeping or waking, from bodily or ghostly enemies; from fire and water, from sudden death, and any manner of danger, "And deliver us from evil;" to all which petitions we beseech God to give his blessed grant; and so seal up all with a devout Amen.

For the clause of giving honour unto God, acknowledging his kingdom, power, and glory—his glory being mentioned in the first petition, his power and kingdom in the second, we leave that clause unto a Christian meditation.

12. And thus have we heard Christ's form of prayer, which is most worthy of our continual Christian practice: First, for the authority thereof, because it was taught by the Son of God; secondly, for the efficacy, because no prayer may be more acceptable

with God the Father, than that which was delivered by his Son ; thirdly, for the divine order of the petitions, wherein all things are contained, one after another, necessary for the good of man ; fourthly, for the brevity, that it might be the more easily learned, better retained, more often repeated, and hope of obtaining sooner granted ; our devotion consisting not so much in a multitude of words, as in the best attention we can yield of our hearts. We need not now say with him, Lord, teach us to pray ; or give unto us a form of prayer, as John taught his disciples¹ ; but, Lord, give us grace to use thy own direction to pray, and never cease to lift up our hands and hearts unto thee.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of Christ's often praying, and specially in the Garden, when his soul began to wax sorrowful, and what fervency in devotion we here learn.

If ever the world were occasioned to call to mind the high devotion of the Son of God, his often praying, and with that fervency too, as never any prayed ; then, specially, in these

¹ Luke xi. 1.

days wherein we live, wherein Satan most seeketh to possess the world with a dumb spirit. When the wolf most layeth wait to stop the sheep's throat, that not every voice might be heard of the Shepherd, the danger is the greater. For the passion of Jesus Christ, let us prevent this evil, and think a little more of calling upon God, remembering who it was that spent whole nights in prayer, when he was labouring for the sins of the world, and the salvation of our souls. If the eyes of God do at all times and in all places behold us, then most especially when we present ourselves before him in prayer, when both attention of mind, and humiliation of body concur, actions most befitting humble suitors.

2. To approach and enter unto the place of prayer, as if we came to sit in commission with God, or would countenance him in his own house, is as unseemly a custom as Christianity can yield. To dehort men now-a-days from long prayer, we are eased of that labour, (which Christ used in refuting the Pharisees,) when so many care not how little they pray at all; and yet for all this not only to speak of prayer, but of fervency in prayer, may be helpful to our Christian desires in serving God, seeing our devotion is often so remiss, as we may seem rather to speak than pray. In consideration hereof let us observe, at this

time, Christ's praying in the garden, when his soul began to wax sorrowful¹, as the Evangelist testifieth.

In this his praying, we may consider these circumstances. First, that it was solitary, for that he now left his disciples as he had oftentimes before done, when he went out alone to pray; which doth commend unto us solitary praying.

Secondly, he prayed with humiliation of body. St. Luke² saith, he kneeled down and prayed; St. Matthew³ and St. Mark⁴, that he fell prostrate upon the earth. The Evangelists may soon be reconciled, for he first kneeled, and afterward, for faintness, he was fain to fall prostrate; and this commends unto us humiliation in praying. When he raised Lazarus⁵, and restored the dumb man⁶ to the use of speaking, we find he lifted up his eyes to heaven, which was his gesture in praying. When Moses⁷ prayed, he held up his hands to God until the going down of the sun, which holding up of the hands David⁸ called his evening sacrifice. When Stephen⁹ prayed, he kneeled down according to Christ's example, here in the second place mentioned.

¹ Matt. xxvi. 37.

² Matt. xxvi. 39.

³ John xi. 41.

⁷ Exod. xvii. 12.

⁹ Acts vii. 60.

² Luke xxii. 41.

⁴ Mark xiv. 35.

⁶ Mark vii. 34.

⁸ Ps. cxli. 2.

The third circumstance to be observed in this our Saviour's praying is, that it was just and right: for he subjected his will to the will of his Father, saying, "If thou wilt:" which doth teach us to commend ourselves wholly to the will of God.

The fourth, that it was with sorrow, for he was in an agony, and this doth put us in mind of that of the apostle: "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray as we ought, but the Spirit maketh intercession for us with sighs which cannot be expressed."¹⁰

The fifth, that it was with perseverance; for he came three times unto his disciples, three times and in three places was he tempted, and three times did he here pray, and willed his disciples to pray, that they enter not into temptation: while he was praying, they were sleeping; while he was sweating, that the drops of blood came down, they were taking their rest: O what devotion was here! His last supper being ended, he goeth forth accompanied with his disciples, speaks unto them (as a loving father upon his death-bed, when he hath not much to say), gives them precepts at parting which they should remember when he is gone from them, of which precepts this was not the least, "Watch and pray, that

¹⁰ Rom. viii. 26.

you enter not into temptation¹:" then he communeth with them, saying, "Stay here, while I go yonder and pray:" this he speaketh at several times.

3. Peter, James, and John go with him; for those to whom he had before showed the glory of his transfiguration, to them would he now show the humility of his passion²; that as they had seen glorious things, so now should they see humble things. To these he saith, "My soul is sorrowful unto death;" unto death: My soul is sorrowful, even to begin to fear death: or "until" may be taken indefinitely, and so, my soul is sorrowful unto death, that is, until a satisfaction for the sins of the world be made by death: or, "until" may be taken inclusively, and so, my soul is sorrowful unto death, that is, until the scandal of my death be turned again to the life of faith. "My soul is sorrowful."

Here Anselme crieth out, "How cometh it to pass, O my God³, that thou taking upon thee the nature of man, shouldst begin to forget thou art God?"

4. Christ assumed this fear and sorrowfulness for many causes; First, to prove the truth of his humanity; for it is natural to man to fear death, and of this natural sorrow

¹ Matt. xxvi. 41.

² Matt. xvii. 1.

³ Unde hoc Deus meus?

was our Lord sorrowful: yet so do we understand him to be sorrowful, and to fear, not with that fear and sorrow which ordinarily drowneth reason, and causeth man to overshoot himself, as Peter for fear of death denied his Master⁴: this manner of fear was far from Christ, for he came with this intent to suffer, and reproveth Peter when he dissuaded him from going to Jerusalem, and suffering there.⁵

There is a kind of stepping back, naturally incident unto all, which at this time appeared in Christ as other human actions did, his eating, his sleeping, his hunger, and the like, all which were in Christ (sin only excepted) properly as in man: now this sorrow and fear was in another respect otherwise in Christ than in us. In us for the most part the passion of fear doth go before the rule of the will and the judgment of reason; but in Christ it did follow after, for both the will and the judgment of reason went before; for when he hungered and thirsted, he did it willingly and of judgment; he feared willingly, he sorrowed willingly and of judgment: by this then there is nothing to be considered in Christ as constrained, but all is to be believed as voluntary; and therefore fear and sorrow, as they were natural, so were they voluntary

⁴ Mark xiv. 68.

⁵ Mark viii. 33.

and rational. Wherefore the original of the text saith, "He began to fear, he began to be sorrowful¹," and not, He was fearful. Fear and sorrow began in the part sensitive, but came not to the mind or understanding. For when the Evangelists say, "His soul began to be sorrowful," there the soul is taken for the part sensitive, in which are passions. And here we may consider that Christ could not die by nature, as Adam could not die until he committed sin ("For the reward of sin," saith the Apostle, "was death"); but as he took upon him human nature, so did he also without our infirmities suffer that voluntarily which was incident to our nature, yea, to our fall.

5. A troubled passion ariseth in the mind, either besides the decree of reason, or in opposite manner against the decree of reason. The former of these two is sometimes incident unto men, although the best amongst men: the second to the imperfect only. A perfection far surmounting both was in Christ, for that in him sense was subject unto reason, reason unto will, the will to the understanding, the understanding to God.

"Christ was sorrowful," saith St. Jerome, "not from any fear of death, which nature refuseth, but for the scandal of his disciples,

¹ Matt. xxvi. 37.

the infelicity of Judas, the ruin of the Jews²," "And thus it is not dissonant from truth," saith St. Ambrose, "if he were heavy in soul for his persecutors."³ We see, according to the judgment of the ancient fathers, how far our Saviour's fear was from distrustful thoughts or weaker passions, which to think to be in him were most impious; but in these sufferings, being rightly considered, we see a most admirable convenience in all, without fancying of unlearned and irreligious conceits.

6. To come to matter of instruction, for that is most behoveful of all. In this sorrowing of our Saviour we learn these things: First, to keep down by the rule of reason sorrows and passions that arise in us, to restrain them and keep them in obedience unto the will. Secondly, not to despair if sorrow and fear at any time surprise us, even unto the suffering of death. Thirdly, to be sorrowful for the state of others, after Christ's example. Fourthly, amidst all our sorrows, to repair only unto God, and commend ourselves unto him as Christ did, by prayer: and, thus uniting our sorrows with his sorrows, we shall the better bear them.

7. This done, Christ departed a stone's cast from them and there prayed, "Father,

² Hieron. in Mat. cap. xxvi.

³ Ambr. in Lu. lib. x.

if it be possible, remove this cup¹:" he saith, "Abba, Father," And we too (saith the apostle) say "Abba, Father," twice Father, both according to the Hebrew and Greek, showing that God is now Father of Jew and Gentile. He saith, "If it be possible," referring the grant of his petition to the will of God; if it may stand with the same will, and not otherwise. He prayeth for the removing of that cup, yet so, that looking to obedience he goeth forward towards his suffering, and saith, "Thy will be fulfilled." What of human desire he before mentioned, he now in action proceedeth to relinquish, as if he would say, Let not that be done which I have spoken according to human affection, but let that be done for which I was sent into the world, and now am willing to suffer. That which he required as man, namely, the removing of the cup, he now leaveth, as resolving wholly to proceed with the will of God. But was the will of Christ any way differing from the will of the Father? No, verily, for he saith, "I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me²;" and this manner of conditional prayer should be remembered of us in praying, "Not our wills, but, Lord, thine be fulfilled."

8. He prayeth the third time the same thing, showing that he goeth to pray, and to

¹ Matt. xxvi. 39.

² John v. 30.

say the selfsame thing too, not of forgetfulness, but of very fervency. Whereby we may observe, that to pray and pray again, is a part of high devotion. The dove went forth from the ark³ the first time, and returned sorrowful as she went out; still the waters were up: she goeth forth the second time, then the flood is abated, and she brings a branch of olive, now a sign of quiet and peace. First, a sorrowful prayer goeth forth; still the waters of adversity are up: the prayer goeth forth again, behold the waters are fallen, prayer brings a crop of olive, joy and tranquillity of mind.

9. At the end of Christ's praying, the angels appear comforting him; they who at this time seem to have presented themselves in the presence of God the Father, astonished at the glory of his Son, come forth, and pray for the removing of this cup. Answer is made, My Son hath of mere love and mercy undertaken the redemption of man by the effusion of his blood, which could be brought to pass by no other means. Which the angels hearing, they returned to Christ; and in honouring they comfort him; and in comforting they honour him. And here observe we three things; first, that our Saviour prayeth long before he receiveth an answer; to show we must not

³ Gen. viii. 11.

by and by give over: Secondly, that the greater his agony was, the longer his prayer was; to show that in greatest agonies we should continue long in prayer: Thirdly, in that the angels came and comforted him, to signify that if we continue with constancy, the angels rejoice over us. In that the drops of blood came down, it showed the greatness of our Saviour's conflict, wherein he seemed both to do and to suffer; his blood was true blood according to his natural existence, but yet miraculous and supernatural if we respect the manner; for it is above nature to pour out together water and blood, which Christ did both alive and dead. Behold, O Christian soul, thy Redeemer and Saviour, bedewed with this wonderful sweat for thy sins. In this it is manifest how bitter his passion was, whose only thought so much changed nature. Of this our Saviour's sweating may be gathered these several observations; First, the greatness of his agony; Secondly, that this agony caused sweat; and this sweat falling upon the earth, we may gather that the earth, or men inhabiting the earth, have benefit hereby.

Now was presented before the eyes of the Son of God, on the one side, God's just judgment, and wrath towards man yet unappeased: on the other side, death and hell as yet not vanquished: himself left as it were

alone to enter the conflict, putting forth his hand to receive the cup, and yet beginneth he to pull it in again ; but, after a little while, goeth forward with full resolution to the work well begun, which he brought to a most happy end.

10. Let the devout man learn, in all the pressure of adversity, to set before his Christian consideration Christ's agony in the garden. Be it that doubtful objects between fear and sorrow do much obscure our natural delights, here have we, for times of trouble, a precedent to follow ; but chiefly in the agony of death, when sick men are pànting and labouring for life, they are said then especially to endure an agony, for then beginneth a conflict ; nature draweth one way, and obedience to the will of God another ; the spirit goeth forward, and the flesh draweth backward ; besides, many thoughts occur about leaving the world, and going to answer for our time here spent, with many other seldom before thought upon. Our Saviour was in an agony when death approached, whence Gregory saith : " Death approaching, an agony is present, and not without cause ; for then is the soul put in great fear, when after a little while she finds that which never will be changed or altered." ¹

¹ *Approinquante morte certamen adest, nec immerito : tunc enim anima terretur, cum post pusillum hoc invenit quod in æternum mutari non possit.*

11. In this agony of agonies and all other, we learn, by our Saviour's example, to have recourse unto prayer; he prayed in the garden, he prayed on the cross, to show that in times of distress we should principally apply ourselves to prayer. Moses prayed at the sea; Daniel prayed sitting amongst the lions¹; Job on the dunghill²; Peter at midnight, when he was in the prison³; and here Christ our Saviour in his agony, when he not only prayed, but prayeth with great fervency, prayeth alone, to show that the mind is most elevated unto God, when we go aside to pray, as he himself here prayeth; and how we are heard. So doth he withal exhort his disciples to pray that they enter not into temptation: and surely no better remedy against temptation than prayer, which is the very whip and scourge of evil motions; for when the thief heareth the good man of the house to cry and call for help, he thinks there is no tarrying for him, if good friends be within hearing. "Cornelius, Cornelius, thy prayers are come up before God⁴:" Wouldst thou exercise thyself in a spiritual life? pray: wouldst thou attain the sweetness of heavenly things? pray: wouldst thou have God help thee in time of extremity? pray: wouldst thou be

¹ Dan. vi. 16.² Job ii. 8.³ Acts xvi. 25.⁴ Acts x. 4.

delivered from temptation? pray. Between Babylon and Jerusalem there is a trusty messenger that often passeth thither, is well acquainted in the king's court, and very gracious with the king himself, for he shall have audience and dispatch as soon as he comes. This messenger is prayer, and even in the silence of the night ascendeth unto secret places, and cometh unto God himself. Moses praying upon the mount, hath the rod of God in his hand, we praying have hold on the cross of Christ crucified. The brethren of Joseph besought him to show them favour; if not for their own sake, yet for their father's sake; "Joseph heard them and wept."⁵



CHAPTER XVIII.

*That Christian men may take comfort amidst the calamities of this life by that of our Saviour—John xiv. 1.
Let not your hearts be troubled; where he armeth his disciples with consolation against troubles.*

"GIVE wine (saith Solomon) to those that have grief⁶;" Christ seeing his disciples have grief of heart, (for why, the Shepherd being taken away, the sheep will be scattered⁷;) he

⁵ Gen. i. 17.

⁶ Prov. xxxi. 6.

⁷ Matt. xxvi. 31.

gives them the sweet wine of consolation against the troubles of the world, saying, "You believe in God, believe also in me¹," &c. By which comfortable exhortation, he that knew their troubled hearts, partly in that he had said, one of them should betray him, and partly also in that he had told them he must shortly depart from them, began now to make the hearts pacified by a most loving and sure repose in him, "You believe in God, believe in me also:" as if he should have said: Be it the world hate you, whom I have separated from the world, for all this let nothing dismay you: your victory is your faith², you are left to the injuries of men; he that is with you is greater than all that is against you, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

Here Christ comforteth his apostles, not much by taking away the afflictions of the world, that they have them not; as by strengthening them when they come, that they faint not: to the outward man he foretelleth a cross; but to the inward man a strength or comfort: a cross to the outward man, that it exult not; comfort to the inward man, that it languish not; and thus he inferreth, saying "Let not your hearts be troubled."

2. In this of our Saviour, we see that the exhortation tendeth to the pacification of the

¹ John xiv. 1.

² 1 John v. 4.

hearts, not that they should not be troubled at all, for that is above human nature ; himself (as we have heard) was troubled in his agony ; but the trouble here spoken of is that which hindereth reason, dismayeth the understanding, is opposite to peace and tranquillity of mind. When the soul is cast down with distrust and heaviness, by reason of the discomforts of the world, to shake off all this with a confidence in Jesus Christ, it is said, " Let not your hearts be troubled : you believe in God, believe in me also."

3. A noble prince sometime of great devotion and valour, seeing his army much dismayed, when they beheld the huge multitude of their enemies coming toward them, perceiving by their countenances his soldiers' hearts began to fail them, ascending to an eminent place, maketh them a very hearty oration, which he drew unto three heads : first, their cause was just, and that God was wont to prosper just enterprises ; secondly, that their enemies were those whom his and their ancestors (who now bare arms with him) had often foiled ; thirdly, that being so few, if they prevailed against that huge multitude, the victory would be glorious ; howsoever, for himself he would die in the battle, or return with triumph. His oration was no sooner ended but a voice was heard throughout all the army,

every one crying, Forward, forward! The event was, they happily prevailed.

A multitude of crosses and calamities are ready to assail us in open field, which may cause our hearts to be troubled; but a most noble champion have we that assures us that our cause is just, our enemies those whom all God's servants have ever resisted; if we prevail, our conquest will be heavenly: our champion himself will live and die in our defence, why should our hearts be troubled? nay, we have won the day; "you shall have troubles in the world, but be of good comfort, I have overcome the world¹." Forward, forward in the name of God.

4. Because Christ knew the hardness of suffering, therefore where he speaks of suffering with him, there he speaks also of sitting with him in his kingdom, "You shall sit upon seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel²;" like the physician, who is wont to mix sweet syrups with his bitter potions, that the patient may be the more willing to receive them. The labours are great, but yet the joy greater that they have who love God; and by this we see how Christ comforteth his apostles, not by promising to take all troubles from them, but when troubles come, to assist and aid them.

¹ John xvi. 33.

² Luke xxii. 29, 30.

"Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to winnow you as wheat³," as if he would say, Toss and winnow you he may, he shall: But make thy faith fail? No, Simon, I have prayed for thee: Believe in God, believe in me also. "By faith (saith the apostle) Moses passed the Red sea⁴;" and by faith we pass the red sea of many tribulations in the world: that which he said unto some, the Son of God saith unto all, "Let not your hearts be troubled."

5. We may not promise unto ourselves better things than our fellow servants have tried; nay, than our Lord himself hath suffered, "Marvel not at this (saith St. John) if the world hate you."⁵

Men might have been encouraged by the example of Camillus, Scipio, and others, which have been hated even when they did well in the commonwealth; and Christian men might have for examples the suffering of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, and other of the old prophets; a cloud of witnesses might be collected in this case, to show how they must look for troubles in the world, but our Saviour urgeth his own case only: "You know that it hated me before you."⁶ There be three things, (saith Thomas Aquinas,) which we are wont to marvel at⁷: the first, when any thing is great;

³ Luke xxii. 31.

⁴ Heb. xi. 29.

⁵ 1 John iii. 13.

⁶ John xv. 18.

⁷ Tho. Aquin. in 1 Epist. Joh. c. iii.

the second, when it is new ; the third, when it is seldom. Now that the world, that is to say, the lovers of the world, do not affect the children of God, it is no great thing. The physician thinks it no great matter if the lunatic man, whom he binds, do strike or kick him ; alas, he is frenzy and knows not what he doth. Secondly, it is no new thing, to have trouble in the world ; we find it so in Abel, and Isaac, and all from the beginning. Thirdly, it is no rare thing ; for there is nothing more common, and therefore our hearts should not be troubled (that is to say, overmuch troubled) with the griefs of the world ; we must not cast away the nut for the bitterness of the rind. If thou wert not troubled, peradventure thou wouldst not devoutly have called upon God¹, which is a principal part of God's worship.

6. The world and the tempter both boast of giving pleasures unto carnal men ; but come to the performance, and these pleasures are very torments. Christ promiseth tribulation in the world ; but come to the inward man, and there we find a world of joy. The root of the tree is bitter, but the fruit is pleasant : Christ promiseth rest, " You shall have rest," but it is " rest unto your souls." For he that sets us in this journey knows what is fittest for passengers, and therefore we may endure

¹ Si non tribularis, fortassis non invocares.

th comfort these outward adversities when ey come. Happy leprosy (saith one) was that made Naaman worship the God of ael in his heart.² The sharp storms of e winter make the trees bare, and the nds scattering the leaves, they for a time und as dead ; yet there remains still life in e root. In like manner afflictions of the orld make the members of Christ seem delate, and the stormy winds of persecution atter abroad the leaves of worldly proerity ; yet there is life in the root, there is th and joy in the heart.

7. There is a difference between the joy worldly men and the joy of those whom rist hath, as it were, taken out of the world, at is, from the love of the world. The forer think felicity to consist in abundance of shes, in pleasures, in glory amongst men, d such like ; all this is but outward and omentary, like a little sunshine in winter ; one fair day it hath oftentimes ten foul, d such a number of troubles as almost the mer pleasures are dashed and vanish to thing. For the latter of these, they have leed often outward adversities, but such s within as if all adversities were nothing ; d this principally cometh to pass by Christ's ans, for whatsoever he touched, he did

² 2 Kings v. 17.

sanctify it; and therefore hunger, thirst, persecution, are not now so grievous, but work all for the good of the faithful. The waters of Mara which were so bitter that none could drink them, Moses but casting in the wood that God appointed him, they became sweet¹: the crosses of the world were grievous until Christ's cross was put in amongst them; now their taste is altered. A strange sight was it, in times of persecution, to see a few lambs to overcome by no other weapon than patience and faith a multitude of wolves, "And to rejoice (as Tertullian saith) in the midst of torments²:" wonderful is it to hear how St. Paul, endued with grace from Christ, doth even challenge and provoke tribulation, and anguish, and hunger, yea, life and death, "Shall any of you all?"—as if he would speak like a man of courage to all the adversities of the world,—“Shall all you separate me from the love of Christ?”³ No, you shall not: and thus we see how in Christ we are armed with inward grace against the world without and the troubles thereof.

8. Another reason which our Saviour useth is, "I go to prepare a place for you⁴," and therefore be of good hope. Moses, to stir up the people in times of their distress, speaks

¹ Exod. xv. 23. 25.

³ Rom. viii. 38.

² Tertul. ad Scap.

⁴ John xiv. 3.

unto them after this manner: "The land you go to possess is not as Egypt, but a champaign country, and goodly to enjoy, which the Lord visiteth with the early and latter rain⁵:" we have promise of a better land than ever Moses promised: "In my Father's house are many mansions."⁶ The journey was long and wearisome for Jacob, a weak and feeble person as he was: yet by reason of inward joy he had conceived in his heart, he well endured it.⁷

"Be it (saith St. Austin) that we have not temporal deliverance from troubles⁸, this showeth that we do not embrace the Christian religion for the commodities of this world, but for the joys of a life to come, which will make amends for all." The benefit of a calm is best welcome after a tempest, liberty is wont to be most pleasant after a time of bondage. "You shall sorrow (saith our Saviour), but your sorrow shall be turned into joy⁹," your sorrow, and therefore not every one's sorrow: yours, who have been faithful unto the end. When the prophet David spake of the sorrows of this world, he calleth them waters: "Save me, O God, for the waters are entered even to my soul¹⁰:" "Lord (saith Peter), bid me come unto thee on the water."¹¹ The same

⁵ Deut. xi. 10.

⁶ John xiv. 2.

⁷ Gen. xlv. 1.

⁸ Aug. lib. xxii. cap. 22. de Civitate Dei.

⁹ John xvi. 21.

¹⁰ Ps. lxi. 1.

¹¹ Matt. xiv. 28.

prophet, in another place, goeth farther, saying, "The floods are risen, O Lord, the floods have lift up their voice, the floods lift up their waves: the waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly, but yet the Lord that dwelleth on high is mightier."¹ In the nine-and-thirtieth Psalm, he uttereth with what great grief and bitterness of mind he was urged to complain: yet remembering himself by whose providence it came, he saith, "I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing."²

CHAPTER XIX.

How that our Saviour exhorting all that would follow him to deny themselves, and take up their cross daily, doth concern us that bear the name of Christians.

BEING forewarned and armed against the trials of the world before they come, it remaineth that we be ready to undergo them when they come. Christ shows us plainly what we must look for if we will be his disciples, when he giveth out in open proclamations as thus: "Whosoever will follow me, let him deny

¹ Ps. xciii. 4.

² Ps. xxxix. 9.

himself.”³ In the text of the Evangelist, when he had now before spoken of his own suffering, he by-and-by speaks of their suffering who would follow him : First, that they should not think that his suffering did absolutely exempt them from all crosses of the world, for “I have taken up my cross, and you must take up yours.” Secondly, he showeth himself as a careful governor in the ship, who in a calm is wont to instruct the mariners against the tempest likely to follow, and this he doth as it were in familiar manner : First, showing what himself had done, and then what his disciples should do : First, what he would suffer, and then what they should suffer. What, Peter? and should I not go to Jerusalem? Yes, it is not only my case but thine, and the case of you all : “Whosoever will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”

2. Here Christ speaketh generally unto all, of what state and condition soever, high and low, rich and poor, whatsoever. When he spake of some special mysteries, then turning him to his apostles, he saith, “It is for you to know :” but speaking of the way to follow him unto his kingdom, he speaketh universally, “Whosoever :” and for this, “It is

³ Mark viii. 34.

for all to know¹:" Again, as he speaketh universally, so doth he speak lovingly: "Whosoever will," not as forcing any, but as lovingly inducing all: and thus as it were leaving his followers to their own willingness, saith, "Whosoever will," by which he doth more effectually draw them, than if he had used all the threatenings in the world. The staid men and grey heads in Israel said unto Rehoboam, "If thou speak kind words unto this people, this people will be thy servants²:" Christ speaks kind words unto us all, and deals most bountifully with man, according to the dignity of his person. He which having laid up rich treasures to bestow amongst his friends, if he will or command the public cryer to say, This and this treasure is ready to be bestowed by a bountiful lord, may it please you now to come and receive it; doth he not now more persuade than if he should by a sharp edict pull and draw men to receive this treasure against their wills?

3. He which hath in his household two sorts of servants, the one free-born and of his alliance, the other slaves and bondmen, when he requireth any service of the former, he speaks unto them mildly, according to their ingenuous disposition, but the other he commands absolutely as common servants. We

¹ Matt. xiii. 11.

² 1 Kings xii. 7.

are as of the chieffer sort of Christ's family, as not having free will, but will freed by grace ; nay, we are of his own alliance, and therefore when he speaks to us, he speaks honourably as unto them that love him, " Whosoever will : " but speaking unto his other creatures, as the heaven, the earth, the sun, the moon, he doth not require, but command them : so in the time of Joshua he commanded the sun to stand still³, in the time of Elias he commanded the heavens to be shut⁴ : when some rebelled against Moses he commanded the earth to open and swallow them⁵, and so likewise doth he proceed with other of his creatures ; but with man, to win his heart, he deals most gently and calls most lovingly, " Whosoever will." The antecedent sheweth the manner of calling, the consequent in this speech of our Saviour the duty of him that is called, " Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."

4. In this consequent we see that somewhat is required at our hands, if we will be Christ's followers, as also what this is : to wit, the denying of ourselves, and the taking up of our cross daily ; and surely most aptly doth our Saviour Christ, after speaking of his own cross and passion, speak in the next place of

³ Jos. x. 12.

⁴ 1 Kings xvii. 1.

⁵ Numb. xvi. 30.

our crosses and suffering, lest presuming of his suffering we should be over-ready to flatter ourselves, and count of nothing but liberty of the flesh, and security of state, thinking that his suffering was enough: therefore, to take away this dangerous conceit, Christ speaks at one time both of his suffering and our suffering, of his passion, as also of the means how we shall come to be partakers of the benefit of his passion, that is, by following him. This following must be in the giving him the full possession of our hearts. The three children followed God¹, and how? By going out of their place? The text saith, they followed God in their hearts. Rebecca² was said to go and inquire of the Lord: whither went she? From the place where he was not, to the place where he was? No. "I the Lord fill heaven and earth³:" she went not from place to place, as it is not required to do in following Christ; but she went from life to life, from manners to manners, from good to better, from grace to grace; and this is to follow Christ the Lord of glory. We think it a piece of credit in the world, and suit is made to be followers (as they say) of men that have countenance above others; but to be one of Christ's followers in sincerity and truth, is far

¹ Song of the Three Children, 18.

² Gen. xxv. 22.

³ Jer. xxiii. 24.

better than all worldly honours how great soever. The poor followers of Christ in humility shall one day have more countenance than all this world's pomp is able to afford. Now little suit is made for this, nay Christ himself becomes a suitor to us; therefore when he calleth, "Whosoever will follow me," as the people said unto Joshua, The Lord is our God, and we will serve him; so may we say, Christ is our Redeemer, and we will follow him.

5. Now what is to be done of him that will follow Christ? marry, two things: the first, "Let him deny himself;" the second, "And let him take up his cross daily." For the first, he that will follow Christ, must love Christ; he which requireth a cheerful giver, requireth a cheerful follower; so he which will follow cheerfully must love Christ; and not only love, but love Christ above himself, and therefore in this love he must deny himself—himself, not either his property, or his friends, but even himself⁴: that is, his own will, his own pleasure, his own love; and say with our Saviour, "Not my will, Lord, but thine be fulfilled."⁵ And this denying of ourselves is offering up, as it were, our souls a sacrifice unto him, by an utter renouncing of ourselves; as if we had no

⁴ Se, non sua, nec suos.

⁵ Luke xxii. 42.

jurisdiction over our own wills, but submitted them wholly unto Christ. We best see (saith St. Chrysostom,) what it is to deny ourselves, when we behold what men are wont to do in denying others¹; when any casteth off an unfaithful companion, he neither rejoiceth at his prosperity, nor is grieved at his adversity; he respects not at all what pleaseth him, and what displeaseth him, as one that will have no more to do with so bad a nature: the like is done in denying of ourselves, that is, our sensual desires, to grow out of love and liking of them, and clean reject them.

To deny our goods, our friends, yea, our very pleasures, is very much: and yet to follow Christ, we must go a step further; that is, we must "Deny ourselves."

6. First of all, we deny ourselves when we yield obedience in all things unto God, which "obedience is better than sacrifice²;" "In obedience (saith Gregory), our own will is sacrificed, in those external oblations the flesh of some other creature is offered."³ In the old law they had many kinds of sacrifices which were killed and offered. Now, (saith Origen,) this manner is altered; instead of a ram, we kill our ireful passions; instead of a goat, our unclean affections; instead of flying fowls,

¹ Chrysos. in hom. Matt. xvi.

² 1 Sam. xv. 22.

³ In obedientia voluntas propria, in sacrificio caro aliena mactatur.

our idle thoughts and wandering cogitations : all these must we kill in denying ourselves ; and the faithful surely, by suppressing the motions of sin, make martyrs of themselves.⁴

Secondly, we deny ourselves when we resist the provocations of sin offered ; as Joseph did when he withstood evil⁵, of whom it may well be said, that it was as great a miracle to see him chaste in that present provocation of his mistress, as it was to see the three children walk without hurt amongst the fiery flames⁶ ; so excellent a thing is it, so acceptable unto God, to deny ourselves, when provocations of sin are offered.

Thirdly, we deny ourselves when we put up wrongs and injuries of the world, saying with Stephen : “ Lord, forgive them, or, lay not this to their charge.”⁷

Fourthly, we deny ourselves when we cross our own wills, and relinquish our natural desires, and when we begin to be centurions over our own affections, and say to this or that, Go, or Come, referring ourselves to the will of God ; that so, not so much we live, as Christ by grace may be said to live in us.⁸

Last of all we deny ourselves when we cease to “ sacrifice unto the net⁹,” or attribute every thing to our own actions, much less our own merits, and therefore least of all in the

⁴ Orig. in Levit.

⁵ Dan. iii. 25.

⁶ Gal. ii. 20.

⁵ Gen. xxxix. 7.

⁷ Acts vii. 60.

⁹ Habak. i. 16.

high mystery of justification. Every one is to say with the Apostle, "By the grace of God I am that I am:" and again, "Not I, but the grace of God in me."¹ And this is the sum of denying ourselves; and this is to the first degree in following of Christ, "Let a man deny himself."

7. The second, "And let him take up his cross daily:" Let him deny himself; and this denying must be done indeed: the word is ἀπαρνησάσθω, that is, deny altogether, or deny for good and all. "Let him deny himself, by declining from evil: Let him take up his cross, by suffering evil: and follow me, by conforming himself to my manners," which were absolutely good. Let him deny himself, by renouncing his own will; take up his own cross, by bearing patiently lesser or greater persecutions; and follow me, by walking in my ways. And "take up his cross:" it is not said, And carry his cross; but let him take it up, to signify a voluntary and willing suffering; because evil men may have many crosses, but they bear them, and do not take them up; they bear them grudgingly and impatiently, not willingly and thankfully, as those do that follow Christ. This cross is said to be daily, because we can never live without crosses, and therefore must daily prepare to suffer, or at leastwise have a mind ready to

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 10.

suffer, that is, always carrying about in our bodies the mortification of our Lord Jesus.

There is none lives, or can live, but he shall find either from himself, or others, a cross to take up. The cross of humble men, is injury; the cross of religious men, is fasting and watching; the cross of rich men, is the contempt of the world; of the poor, want and scarcity: so every one hath his cross, and in this world we must take up and endure the same; "Whosoever will follow me, let him take up his cross daily."

In this we see that our Saviour doth not deal after the manner of worldly rulers, who, to have troops and trains follow them, are wont to tell of pleasures and profits, and such like: Christ speaks of taking up a cross, of suffering; of denying himself, if any will follow him. One would think that this persuading were a kind of dissuading, and a mean rather to make most men sooner forsake him, than follow him; and yet such was the power of his calling, so great was the hope of immortality, as this calling of Christ filled the world full of Christians, notwithstanding the manifold crosses they were before promised to endure for that same; and "Follow me" doth sweeten the most bitter and sharpest adversities of all. To follow Christ, what else is it but the greatest felicity that can happen unto man?

8. But here we see we must expect a cross,

as our Saviour foreshows us, that we take not offence thereat when it cometh. Christ suffered his own apostles to hunger, to be in danger of tempests, and to go forth in the world amongst many enemies. Let it not grieve us to hear the gate is strait, and the way narrow, because the end thereof leadeth unto life. The crosses of the world are many, as we see in Abraham, who was fain to forsake his own country, and live in fear among strangers¹: in Samson, who was taken of his enemies, and scornfully handled²: in Zedekiah, who in his old age had his eyes pulled out, and was fain to end his days in sorrow.³ Heathen men make mention of Polycrates of Samos, and of Cambyses, who after much glory suffered sorrowful crosses: but for the faithful, let not the world's crosses dismay them. The natural sun is profitable unto us, not only in summer when it ripeneth our fruits, and is nearer unto us, but in winter also when we sow our seeds, and the heat thereof is farther off: so is it with the Sun of righteousness.

¹ Gen. xii. 1.² Judg. xvi. 21.³ 2 Kings xxv. 7.

CHAPTER XX.

That Christ's example doth teach Christian men to live in all orderly and dutiful obedience to princes and governors.

THE saying of the Greeks is true, "Order is the mother and preserver of things." He whose seat is in heaven, and dominion over all, as he guideth by himself the whole course of the world, in a wonderful decency and order; so doth he also much respect the same decency to be observed amongst the sons of men. For the better observation hereof, he gave his people, as priests to instruct them, so rulers to govern them, both in their places to go in and out before them. Government, therefore, and governors are from God, who ruleth and governeth all. Where none do guide others, what order can be looked for? Where order is not had, confusion will follow, and the success of confusion is plain ruin. Where men shake off obedience, and live as they list, what peace can be preserved? Where peace is not, what state, either in church or commonwealth, can long stand? Where governors ordain a law, and all hearken unto the law, (because a law without partiality doth speak

indifferently unto all,) there is obedience, there is concord, there is continuance in well doing.

2. Now for those of all other, who live under a law of laws, to wit, the law of grace; for these I say, before all other, to show all dutiful obedience to rulers and governors, placed over them by the very ordinance of God himself, what more seemly, more Christian? Branches of one vine, stones of one building, fellows of one family, children of one Father, members of one head, nay, heirs of one kingdom. What more acceptable than amongst these people to obey rulers, and rulers to obey God? When Moses¹ is praying, Joshua leading, Israel obeying, God blessing and prospering all, O happy are the people that are in such a case. The water (saith St. Cyprian²) that is separated from the fountain drieth; the bough that is cut from the tree withereth; the light that is removed from the sun vanisheth: The people all say, "He that will not obey Joshua, let him die."³ For Christian religion especially, as it doth bind men in duty and devotion to honour God, so doth it also contain them within the lists and limits of duty and obedience to God and man, knowing that "the powers that are,

¹ Exod. xvii. 10.

² Cyp. de Uni.

³ Josh. i. 18.

are ordained of God.”⁴ To omit long discourse in this case, and to follow the course in hand, the only example of our Saviour Christ’s obedience doth overthrow at one touch, the lofty and Babylonical building of stubborn spirits, who refused obedience to government amongst men. At his very birth obedience was showed, when the Blessed Virgin came to Bethlehem to be taxed.⁵ His circumcision was his conformity to the law; his presentation in the temple was the same; his paying tribute⁶, and exhorting others to do the like⁷, showed how much he allowed and established civil obedience to superiors and governors, in giving every one his due in their calling. His Apostles, Peter and Paul⁸, exhort hereunto; the one willing us to obey for God’s sake, the other for conscience’ sake. The practice of the primitive church, under those good emperors Constantine, Jovian, Theodosius, Valentinian, and others, showeth how dutifully and orderly Christians lived, for obedience, above all nations and people of the world. Eleutherius commendeth Lucius, a king of this land⁹, for his governing the people according to the laws of God, and

⁴ Rom. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 13.

⁵ Luke ii. 4—27.

⁶ Matt. xvii. 27.

⁷ Matt. xxii. 22.

⁸ Rom. xiii. 5.

⁹ Epist. Eleuth. citatur inter leges Edu. prim.

St. Ambrose¹ praiseth Valentinian for the same.

3. Now where is the opinion of those men, who thought themselves freed by a vain surmise of Christian liberty?² Surely it is so slender, as almost it is not worth the refuting. The misunderstanding of some Scriptures, which they have hammered in the forge of their weak brains, has caused them to rove and range in humours, they know not whether themselves; for so are they wont to be stricken with a spirit of giddiness, who would be singular and above others. "Princes of the nations bear rule; amongst you it shall not be so."³ What a far-fetched consequent is this! The Apostles must not have a tyrannical authority one over another, as Nero, Caligula, and such tyrants had; therefore Christian people should not live in obedience to superiors! We are freed from the law⁴, being called in Christ to a state of Christian liberty; and therefore subjection taketh away liberty! If free, then where is any restraint over us? St. Peter⁵ tells us, that ignorant men pervert Scriptures: the answer is plain; Christian liberty freeth us from the bondage of the law, and the servitude of sin, but most

¹ Ambros. in Orat. fu.

² Sleyd. in com. de Anabapt.

³ Matt. xx. 25.

⁴ Rom. vii. 6.

⁵ 2 Pet. iii. 16.

fitly agreeth with obedience to rulers, nay, to God himself, who saith, "By me princes reign." The Apostle telleth us, that in the latter days "Men shall be lovers of themselves, disobedient, heady, highminded, having a show of godliness; and from such," he saith, "turn away."⁶ St. Jude also saith, "These are murmurers and complainers, walking after their own lusts; But edify yourselves," saith he, "in your most holy faith."⁷

4. "God standeth in the congregation of princes⁸," saith David, and therefore the first precept is, Fear God; the second is, Honour the king, as if he would say, Both go together. We give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.⁹ It was St. Ambrose's protestation, to this effect, unto a great emperor, when he said, "My body, my goods, and all earthly things I yield thee, O emperor, in all obedience. And for my soul, I yield that to the Emperor of heaven¹⁰;" alluding to that of the Gospel, "Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." To show that we must homage our hearts to our heavenly Cæsar, it is so manifest as none cannot but know it; yet

⁶ 2 Tim. iii. 4.

⁷ Jude, ver. 16.

⁸ Ps. lxxxii. 1.

⁹ Matt. xxii. 22.

¹⁰ Ambros. tom. iii. lib. 5.

seeing we live in those days wherein men forget almost whose creatures they are, we had need to be put in mind of this duty which we owe unto the King of kings. Faith saith, He is our Father : Obedience saith, Therefore worship him. Our allegiance toward him is devotion and love ; and nature hath taught us to acknowledge as much. The light which is born with us doth show us we have a duty to perform to the God of heaven. The greatest emperors of this world are his subjects ; they have God over them, and men beholding what they do. We are all God's creatures by existence, his clients by law, his children by adoption, his people by obedience. Thousand thousands¹ serve him in glory, who knows as verity, sits as majesty, loves as charity, and rules as equity. Heathen men can tell us, it is ingrafted in man to pray, to offer sacrifice. If we are distressed we seek unto God ; if we have want we crave succour of him ; so he is our preserver, our governor. Our tribute, therefore, is the obeisance of our souls, which we should yield unto him, while the soul is the soul.

5. Now as we show our obedience to God, so do we show obedience also to those who have a subordinate power, and are set over us by God. "It is not thee," said the Lord to

¹ Dan. vii. 10.

Samuel, "but it is me whom this people have refused."² It is not so much the ruler set over them by God, as God himself, whom disobedient people refuse to obey. "He that resisteth the power," saith the apostle, "resisteth the ordinance of God, because there is no power but of God: and give," saith he, "unto every one his duty, tribute to whom tribute is due; honour to whom honour belongeth; custom to whom custom appertaineth³:" and therefore we find that God hath punished from time to time murmurers and mutinous people, as by that of Dathan, Corah, and Abiram⁴, whom God made an example for others; and the apostle St. Paul hath reference to this, when he saith, "Neither murmur you as some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer⁵: These came upon them for example." "O," saith the wise man, "wish no evil in your heart unto the ruler of the people, for the bird of the air shall disclose it." Should we not honour them whom God hath honoured? and love them whom God hath loved? Do we not sit down under their government as under a shadow keeping us from the heat, and shrouding from the storms, when we are

² 1 Sam. viii. 7.

⁴ Numb. xvi. 32.

³ Rom. xiii. 3. 7.

⁵ 1 Cor. x. 10, 11.

defended from invasion abroad and oppression at home, which could not be but by God's vicegerents that govern from him, and for him. Yield obedience to these we may, we must even of conscience.

6. When the queen of the south came from far to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and see his princely port in royal estate, she might have said, I am a woman, and therefore I cannot; a governor myself, and therefore I need not; the way is long, and therefore I will not go to see this Solomon, and his government, whom the world doth so much admire: she useth none of these excuses, but forth she comes, and never defers her journey until another time; and now beholding Solomon's princely order and magnificent state, (she had heard much, but saw more) what doth she, but by and by begin to magnify the Author of Solomon's estate? "O blessed be the Lord thy God (saith she), which loved thee, to set thee on the throne as king instead of the Lord thy God; because thy God loveth Israel for ever, to make thee king, to do equity and righteousness."¹ As if she would have said, O Solomon, such a state, such a government, such a peace, such a time, such a temple, such wisdom, it is not of man, nor

¹ 2 Chron. ix. 8.

from man, "Blessed be the Lord thy God, which loved thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel."

7. Affectionate were the hearts of the people to David their king², whom God had set over them. What, should David adventure himself? O no, better it were that many miscarry, yea, ten thousand, say the people (as it were with tears of thankfulness): God save our David, for if David go, the light of Israel is extinguished; they would not the least hurt should befall him who was the stay of them all; and therefore, as humble suitors, seemed to beg his preservation at the hands of God. Those of Bethulia said to Judith, "Thou art the rejoicing of our nation, good Judith, thou hast done much good in Israel, blessed be thou of God."³

The apostle willeth that prayers and supplications, and giving of thanks, be made for all, for kings and all that are in authority⁴, that we may live a peaceable life under them, in all godliness and honesty. Great cause had the men of Israel to beseech God that Josias might continue with them⁵: for if he were taken away, it was because he should not see the evil to come: as when Moses and Joshua departed from Egypt, then came (and

² 2 Sam. xxi. 17.

⁴ 1 Tim ii. 1.

³ Judith xiv. 9.

⁵ 2 Chron. xxxv. 24.

not until they were gone) the Egyptians' misery: "O," saith the prophet, "save and deliver David from the hand of strange children, that there be no leading into captivity, nor no complaining in our streets."¹

And thus should we add unto obedience love; to love prayer for the protection of them whom God amongst men hath set in commission with himself, to help for him, to rule for him: "'To these (saith Tertullian) honour is due for their excellence; fear for their power given them; obedience for civil duty; tribute for the preservation of peace; love for affection, which bringeth forth prayer and piety."² So what should Christians of all other in the world but honour them whom God hath placed in his own room for the establishing of his own laws, and worship here beneath amongst men, and specially appointed over his church, which is the company of Christian people, for the quiet and conservation thereof, according to that of the prophet spoken long before, "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers."³

¹ Ps. cxliv. 14.

² His debetur honor, propter excellentiam; timor, propter datam potestatem; obedientia, propter morale debitum; amor, propter affectionis operationem.—*Tertul. ad Scap.*

³ Isai. xlix. 23.

CHAPTER XXI.

That Christians may enjoy earthly commodities, and possess riches: but how they should be affected towards them.

MAN, who consisteth of two parts, the one earthly, the other heavenly, hath answerable hereunto means allotted him of God for the preservation of either: and therefore, first, temporal things for the time being: and in good time, eternal for the time to come. And God said, "Adam, have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and every thing that moveth upon the earth:" and again, "Adam, I have given thee every herb bearing seed, and every tree in which is fruit⁴:" and so every thing serves Adam, and Adam is only to serve God. The fields to walk on, the fruits to feed on, the flowers to smell on, bread to strengthen man's heart, oil to make him a cheerful countenance; pleasant and profitable things, all for man, and man only to honour the Author of all. Abraham's servants said, "God hath blessed our master Abraham marvellously; he hath given him sheep and oxen, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants."⁵ Jacob said (speaking of his two bands or great herds of sheep and camels that went before him), "With my staff (or without any provision at all, a poor

⁴ Gen. i. 28, 29.

⁵ Gen. xxiv. 35.

lone man as it were) came I over this Jordan; Lord, I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies.”¹ As if Jacob should have said, These kine and bullocks, these asses and foals, all these goods and substance round about me, they are the mercies of God, and so come from the great storehouse of heaven.

“There was a man in the land of Uz, called Job, an upright and just man, and one that feared God and eschewed evil”²; saith the holy Scripture. The next thing mentioned of Job is, his substance was very great; yea, he was the greatest of all the men of the east: thereby the Holy Ghost showeth us, that as he had the riches and goods of the world, so did he withal rightly dispose and govern the same; he was just, upright, and one that feared God; and these were God’s blessings rightly gotten or gathered, orderly disposed, lawfully possessed: for first he did not forget God, when he should have most remembered him, that is, when he was blessed and prospered by him: secondly, as he abounded in riches amongst men, so did he also increase or abound in devotion towards God, whom he feared: Job did sacrifice every day. Here was right possessing of earthly substance, rich and godly together; this was a rich man indeed, when both met together. “If riches increase;” there is the increase of riches, which

¹ Gen. xxxii. 10.

² Job i. 1.

are given from God himself³: "Set not thy heart upon them;" there is the use of riches, and with what proviso we do enjoy them.

2. To call in question whether God's people may possess earthly commodities, is an invention more strange than true. He who would have every tribe a part allotted for an inheritance, for them and theirs amongst his people⁴, did intend no other but that they should successively have an inheritance to possess: and why? he hath given the earth and earthly things unto the sons of men, but that they should enjoy the same. The laws of nature and nations tell us, that amongst men there must be MINE and THINE: and the Gospel doth well accord with this as requisite amongst Christians, "Take that which is thine," or that which God hath allotted thee out, and given thee to enjoy. It was a mere irreligious, rapinous, and scoffing device of Julian, to spoil and prey upon both the goods of the Church, and people of God; with, "If thou wilt be perfect, leave all that thou hast: only seek treasure in heaven, this is fittest for men of your profession, who have renounced the world."⁵ The like said Auxentius when he would have the Church and Church possessions, to waste and consume them as he list; but St. Ambrose tells them, if Naboth would not leave

³ Psalm lxxii. 10.

⁴ Jos. xiv. 1, 2.

⁵ Naz. Orat. contr. Jul. Matt. xix. 21.

his father's inheritance, should I leave Christ's inheritance?

These be but shifts pretended, when the greatest persecutors of Christians could formally tell them, "Their God was no gatherer of money, or possessor of riches, and that their account should not be for things transitory: wherefore they did them good, in unburdening them of these troublesome possessions, and as for greater revenues, Down with them, down with them, even to the ground."

3. There was no fitter way (as the men thought) of ruining Christ's religion, than by taking away those means whereby the exercise of religion was continued; and surely it was so, for soon would the public practice of religion decay, were there not some means by temporal commodities for the continuance thereof. To this end therefore endowments were first allotted out by God to the tribe of Levi¹, and since hath he stirred up good men to show great bountifulness this way.

The people never thought it a burden to bring unto the tabernacle², and the well-disposed have been glad they had somewhat to dispose for the setting forth of the service of God; accounting it a mercy of God, they had the honour to do good.

For the use therefore and exercise of Christ's religion, we see in the first place, not only

¹ Josh. xiii. 14.

² Exod. xxxvi. 5.

how lawfully, but how religiously, these temporal and earthly possessions may be enjoyed : For the state of Christians in general, both the hungry conceit of the Apostolical certainty (of whom Epiphanius maketh mention in former times³), and the running fancy of the Anabaptists of later time, who would bring in a mingle mangle, partly consisting of a Platonical community, and partly also of affected poverty, is most dissonant for the state and government of Christians; especially when God hath given them the blessing of peace, wherein they should honour him with all seemliness, in the beauty and holiness of his temple. How could they rather be helpful than chargeable to others, without the possession of temporal commodities ?

Pharaoh cries upon the Israelites to have them make their stint and number of brick, and yet takes away that which might yield them means to accomplish their work.

* The persons to whom reference is here made, called themselves Apostolics and Renouncers. Epiphanius (Cont. Hær. lib. ii. c. 61) represents them as having done much injury to the peace and unity of the Church, by their will-worship and heretical tenets. They renounced marriage, and also the possession of private property. The reading in the text of the edition of 1602 ["the hungry conceit of the Apostolical certainty"] arose perhaps from an error of the press; whilst subsequent editions, by passing over the words altogether, afford us no clue to discover Dr. Sutton's original expression.—Ed.

Christians must feed Christ in the hungry, clothe him in the naked, harbour him in the harbourless: let these men show how this should be done, if earthly riches be not possessed. But riches (say they) are the mammon of iniquity, and the possession of them is the root of evil!¹ True, some men have hurt themselves with weapons, not using them as they ought, as those do in misapplying of holy Scriptures: Therefore take away the use of both generally from all? This is a far-fetched inference, and far from common reason. That riches are called the riches of iniquity, it is not so said, as if they were in themselves so; but the default is, that oftentimes they become so by the fault of those that possess them. It is not the matter of money; but it is that same love of money, that is the root of evil: Satan soonest prevailed with Judas that bare the bag; yea, that loved the bag. This was the cause that our Saviour spake, how hard it is for rich men to enter into the kingdom of heaven; because rich men for the most part are so carried away with the love of riches, as they oftentimes forget and forego the love of God for a little dross and baggage of the world. This was the cause that made the young man in the Gospel sorrowful²; every word of our Saviour was a sword that did

¹ Luke xvi. 9.² Matt. xix. 16.

pierce the heart, "Go," and therefore make no delay: "Sell," and therefore depart from hence out of hand; "all that thou hast," and therefore thy whole substance: "give," and therefore freely bestow, "unto the poor," and therefore to them that cannot recompense thee again. The text saith, "He was rich, and went away very sorrowful." And surely so it is, that rich men in these cases are much sorrowful.

Christ our Saviour likeneth riches to thorns³; and if riches be in covetous men's hearts, no marvel though they have many pricking and piercing sorrows.

4. Now though riches sometimes, and to some men, are the occasion of evil (when we seek them to follow vanities, and live without controlment), it doth not therefore follow, that they are so generally unto all. True it is, that we should not trust in such uncertain riches, nor stay ourselves upon these inferior and transitory things, but mind a state of all continuance to come; yet this renouncing of the world in affection and love, doth not enjoin an utter contempt of all earthly benefits, which we may use to the good of ourselves and others.

When Christ our Saviour said, "Fear not them which can kill the body⁴;" he doth not

³ Matt. xiii. 22.

⁴ Matt. x. 28.

exclude all reverence and fear to be given unto such, but the meaning is, Do not so fear them, as you neglect to fear him which hath power to kill both body and soul. When he saith, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but labour for the meat which perisheth not¹," he doth not thereby dehorte us from labouring for the meat which perisheth; but this is spoken by way of comparison, that is, Do not so labour for the meat that perisheth, that you neglect to labour for the meat that perisheth not. So when he saith; "First, seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof²," it is not contradictory to that of the Apostle: "Provide aforehand things necessary³:" Provide for things necessary hath its time: so that our Saviour's [rule] be first remembered: First, seek the kingdom of heaven, and the righteousness thereof. It is not so much the care as the inordinate care of earthly things (which the Greek text hath, *μερίμνα*,) he there dehortheth. The care for the life present and things necessary thereunto, is in the Apostle commended; but in the Evangelist, the care of heavenly things is preferred: He that provideth aforehand for things of this life, as he that giveth his virgin into marriage, doeth well⁴; but he that provideth for things appertaining to the

¹ John vi. 27.² 1 Cor. xvi. 2.³ Matt. vi. 33.⁴ 1 Cor. vii. 38

life to come, as he that giveth not his virgin, loeth better : the desires of things necessary for our abode here are many, but the desire of and for our heavenly being is more commendable : Rachel was the fairer, though Leah was the fruitfuller.⁵ Our only care to possess heaven and heavenly things, is like Martha's part, which Christ said should never be taken from her.⁶

5. This notwithstanding, a sufficiency for the maintenance of life, the lawful use of worldly goods and possessions may be continued, so we use them as mariners do their oars, to help them along till they come to the haven ; or as wayfaring men do their staves, which willingly they lay aside when their journey is done. The scope is, that we be indifferent unto riches, and think of them in Christianity, as the philosopher himself did concerning the state of felicity : " If we have them, they help us ; if not, they do not undo us⁷ : " because Christians can be rich with a little, and content howsoever, having learned with the apostle both to abound and to want ; knowing that they brought nothing into this world, neither shall they carry any thing out.⁸

" Think and think again, (saith St. Austin,) that we Christians are not born for this

⁵ Gen. xxix. 17.

⁶ Luke x. 41.

⁷ Si adsunt ondant ; absunt, non tollunt.—*Arist. Eth.* lib.

⁸ 1 Tim. vi. 7.

world, or to enjoy the riches of the same; but we look for farther and better riches to be received and possessed in the world to come."¹

6. It is the insatiable desire of riches which is so often reprehended: "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be oppressed with the cares of this life, and that day come upon you unawares."² The eagle dies not so much of age, as of hunger: of all vices none doth more wax old with us than covetousness. What should we be so earnest upon the world, which we must shortly leave? how should we use the commodities thereof, but as the Egyptians did their bondmen, evermore looking for greater riches elsewhere? When Judas Maccabeus saw his men over-greedy of a little gain, and thereupon to begin to desist from the battle they had in hand, Judas willeth them to follow on the pursuit of the enemy now flying, "for (quoth he), in the end, you shall safely take the spoils, or at last you shall have riches enough³:" let us not stay upon these transitory things too much, or too long, forgetting the present occasion we have in hand, but let us go forward in the course of Christian profession we have undertaken: there will come a time when we shall take

¹ Epist. ad Jul. xi. 1.

² Luke xxi. 34.

³ 1 Macc. iv. 17.

the spoil, and have treasure to the uttermost of our desires.

7. The touchstone is said to try gold, and gold is said to try men: if one should have offered Alexander the Great a commodity to the value of twenty pound, and showed him the mean and manner how to gain it, Alexander would scarce have hearkened, or so much as given ear to such a motion, because his mind was upon gaining kingdoms and empires. In like manner tell a heavenly-minded man of compassing great possessions, and laying up much treasures, he will not much respect the discoursing of these matters; for why? he minds the getting of greater matters, or the laying up of treasure in heaven: and after this manner did Abraham and Jacob, and many others, possess riches, having their minds ever set upon better riches to come.

And here now is the manner, how Christian men may enjoy riches, and hold earthly possessions. "If you do not love them (saith St. Gregory), as you possess them, you do leave them in possessing them⁴:" which is the manner how we should be affected towards earthly commodities: We may leave them even when we possess them. The reason is, we do not love them, or set our hearts upon

⁴ Si nihil amando possidetis, etiam possidendo relinquitis.

them, we rest content with what God hath bestowed upon us, and for that insatiable desire of gain or glory, in the name of God, let it go. A misery is it under the sun, men live poor, that they may die rich ; and make no end of gathering (they know not themselves for whom) so they may leave rich executors ; but they respect not the state of their needy souls.

CHAPTER XXII.

How Christ exhorteth to forsake father and mother, and all for his sake.

WHEN we hear by that of Simeon, that Christ our Saviour “was the light of the Gentiles¹,” that by him came grace and truth², that he is our righteousness³, as the apostle speaketh, we readily hearken unto all this, and can find in our hearts to believe it, and we do well in so doing ; but when we hear, on the other side, that in following of him we must take up our cross⁴, deny ourselves, leave father and mother⁵, and all for his sake, we draw back-

¹ Luke ii. 32.

² John i. 17.

³ 1 Cor. i. 30.

⁴ Mark viii. 34.

⁵ Luke xiv. 26.

ward, and begin to say with the men of Capernaum, "This is a hard saying⁶," as if we were loth to hear on that ear that tells us of leaving all for Christ's sake. We persuade ourselves we love Christ, and think we have discharged this love in a little believing in him. No, it is not so: if we did love Christ indeed, then would we forsake all for his sake. When Jacob loved Rachel he left his kindred and country⁷: it is the sign of true love to forsake all things for the thing loved. Where your treasure is (as hath been showed), that is to say, the thing that you love, there your heart is, that is, all the cogitations of your mind. Wherefore if we did love Christ indeed, then would we show the properties of true love, in forsaking all for his sake, and giving him our hearts.

2. All creatures (say the philosophers) desire their centre, and do nowhere rest but in their proper spheres; the spark of fire tendeth upward; the floods and all waters have many turnings and windings, but they never cease until they come into the sea, that common receptacle of all waters: the soul of man hath her centre, which is God: she never resteth until she be there, and when she is there she would not be removed. "Lord, thou hast made us for thyself, and our

⁶ John vi. 60.

⁷ Gen. xxix. 18.

heart is unquiet until it be with thee.”¹ We need not marvel to see men which are addicted to the love of the world or the flesh, or any thing (except God), how they are often troubled and vexed, how they are weak, weary, and full of discontent; the reason is, they are not in their proper sphere, which is God: wherefore it falleth out otherwise with these that love God. “The just,” saith Solomon², “is as a lion:” “He is not cast down,” saith the prophet, “whatsoever evil tidings happen unto him.”³ He therefore only is said to live, which wholly liveth unto God by love; for the life of the others is a kind of death. Wherefore to fly from the Egyptian mistress, leave with Joseph the cloak of worldly love, which cannot hide us from trouble and distress.⁴ It is said, that when Christ came into Egypt, all the idols there fell down; and sure it is, that when the love of Christ doth come into our hearts, all the idol desires of the world and the flesh will fall to nothing. “No man can serve two masters⁵,” that is, at one time two masters commanding contrary things; so doth the love of Christ and the love of the world. Wherefore let us leave the one, and cleave unto the other; lest

¹ Fecisti nos, Domine, propter te, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec perveniat ad te.—*Aug. Med.*

² Prov. xxviii. 1.

³ Ps. cxii. 7.

⁴ Gen. xxxix. 12.

⁵ Matt. vi. 24.

leaning unto the one we forsake the other, and ourselves be forsaken.

3. And should we not forsake all the world for Christ's sake? Should we not leave chaff for gold? puddle water for the fountain of life? straw and stubble for precious stones? nay, vile earth, for heaven itself? When Elisha followed Elijah his master⁶, he left his oxen ploughing, as if he had now a better husbandry in hand. When Christ called his apostles, they left their fishing (and yet continued a trade of fishing still, for now they should be fishers of men) and they followed him. Peter saith, "Lord, we have left all."⁷ What was this "all," but some old boat and a few rotten torn nets? for these were now in the mending. Was this that all? Yea, and Peter left more too at this time than Alexander the Great could desire, for Peter left the love of the world for the love of Christ, which was more, and of more worth, than many worlds. "The apostles indeed," saith St. Austin, "left not much, but yet look what they were willing to leave for the love of Christ, and we shall find it more than many kingdoms." By this example of the apostles, we learn to forsake three things for the love of Christ: by their nets, the pleasures of the flesh, which are wont to take men and snare

⁶ 1 Kings xix. 20.

⁷ Matt. xix. 27.

them ; by the ship, the riches of the world, which doth carry us away from the haven of true rest ; by their father and mother, those things that are nearest and dearest to us in the world : All these must we leave for the love of Christ.

4. There is a nearer conjunction between Christ and the faithful than we have with father and mother : of them have we a being in nature, but of Christ, a being in grace ; of them our being, of Christ our well-being. To honour father and mother is the fifth commandment of the law¹, but to honour God is the first commandment of the law ; to show that to honour God is above all. It is said, "Man shall leave father and mother, and live with his wife²:" but he must leave father and mother, and wife, and all, to dwell with Jesus Christ in love. St. Jerome saith, "If my father stood weeping on his knees before me, and my mother were behind me, pulling me back ; if all my brethren, sisters, kinsfolks, and children on every side were about to retain me in a sinful life, I would despise them all, fling off my mother, run over my father, to go to Christ, who calleth me ; and so embrace his love."

"Whosoever hateth not his father for my

¹ Exod. xx. 12.

² Mark x. 7.

sake³:" a strange speech to hear charity itself speak of hate, and much more to exhort it ; but consider how it is spoken, not literally or simply to hate (for how could he speak so, that so much honoured his father and mother⁴, and gave a law for the performance of this duty ?), but if father and mother be loved more than Christ, or draw us from the love of Christ, then (as God said unto Abraham, Get thee from thy own country and kindred⁵, so) get thee in this case from father and mother, yea, go a step farther, yea, forsake thy own life, forsake all rather than forsake the love of Christ⁶: "O take not away Benjamin ; for if Benjamin be gone, the joy of Israel is gone⁷:" O leave not the love of Jesus Christ ; for if that forsake us, all the world cannot comfort us.

5. One mentioneth the state of a distressed man, like unto that steward in the Gospel⁸, who was called by his master suddenly to give an account of great substance committed to his charge⁹: This man not able in the world to make any account, nay, ashamed (his dealings had been so slender) to look his master in the face, in this distressed condition he knows not what to do, he must give an account, a great account, and a great account

³ Luke xiv. 26.

⁶ Gen. xii. 1.

⁷ Gen. xlii. 38.

⁹ Damasc.

⁴ Luke ii. 51.

⁶ Luke xiv. 27.

⁸ Luke xvi. 3.

suddenly. At last he bethinks himself of three friends he had, and he resolves in this necessity to make trial of them what they would do for him: coming unto the first of these friends, and having opened his grief, this friend tells him that he could find in his heart to do him good, but he had so many to pleasure, that he must needs pardon him, and so leaves him. This done he cometh unto his second friend, and showeth him in like manner his miserable estate, prays him to speak a good word for him; Surely, saith he, I would speak for thee, but to tell thee a plain truth, when I come before thy master, I shall rather speak against thee than for thee. Now was this distressed man more sorrowful than ever; he hath one only friend which he hath often injured, and therefore was ashamed to go unto him; yet at last he comes and makes his moan unto his friend: he had no sooner heard his necessity, but forthwith he goeth and maketh full satisfaction and account in his own person for this distressed man.

The first of these three friends is the world, which hath so many to pleasure, as the distressed sinner finds little comfort, if at any time he crave help of it. The second friend is the law of God, which will rather speak against him than for him. The third is our Lord Jesus, the surest friend of all, whose love is more dear unto us than heart can conceive;

this is the friend that will stand by us when all fails us : and should we not therefore forsake all for his sake ? Should we, with Demas, follow the world, because it hath a little more pleasure than Paul's preaching ?¹ No, for these pleasures are not permanent.

6. What should possess our hearts rather than the love of Christ ? The soul is a house possessed of a tenant, which is the love of God ; that when the desire of earthly things doth come, there is no room ; the house is taken up before. Wayfaring men, when they see the inn full, they pass along. Wandering desires, when they see our hearts full of the love of God, away they go. Now if this be the effect of the love of God, to make us forsake not only those that are near unto us, but ourselves, much more should it cause us to leave things of lesser moment. First, for the love of perfection ; for he that will follow Christ must leave all : secondly, for the love of reward ; because in leaving earthly things he shall find heavenly.

When one said unto our Saviour, "Lord, I will follow thee," Christ telleth him that "The foxes had holes,* the birds had nests, but the Son of man had not where to hide his head."² If thou wilt follow me for profit's sake, and a little commodity here, thou art

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 10.

² Luke ix. 58.

not fit to be one of my disciples. For if thou do follow me, it must be for love, and this love for my sake must make thee forsake all: "It is not so much required how much we leave, as with what love we leave all things in the world."¹

7. We read that heathen philosophers have left all earthly cares for the love of learning: but much more should we do it in following Christ, because too many cares of this world do much trouble us; as much serving did Martha.² How many have there been in all ages, who have left the love of earthly things for the love of Christ? It is said of one By-sarius, a devout man (who, to do a work of charity, had on a time bestowed part of his own raiment), being asked of a great king, who had spoiled him of his clothing? "This," quoth he, showing him the book of the Gospel; thereby signifying for whose sake and for whose love he had showed mercy.

And herein is manifested the law of perfection, in leaving all for the love of Christ. Peter said unto Jesus, "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we

¹ Non attenditur quantum relinquitur, sed qua voluntate.—*Gre. in Ill.* 1 Sam. vii.

Probably this reference is made to the commentary of Pope Gregory on 1 Sam. ch. vii. The same sentiment is expressed in his fifth Homily on St. Matthew.—*Ed.*

² Luke x. 40.

have ?” Jesus said unto him, “ Verily I say unto you, That when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his majesty, you that have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit upon twelve thrones, and judge the twelve tribes of Israel ; and whosoever shall forsake houses, or brethren or sisters, or fathers or mothers, or wife or children, or lands for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold more, and shall inherit everlasting life.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

Of Christ’s many miracles, and what we learn by them.

THAT we might learn to know him to be the true Messias which was sent into the world, Christ confirmed his heavenly doctrine by many heavenly doings ; that those whom his teaching could not move, at least his divine working might compel. “ If I do not the works of my Father,” saith he, “ believe me not ; If I do them, though ye believe not me, yet believe me for my works’ sake. The works which I do, testify of me.”³ Whereby we see whereunto tended the miracles of the Son of God : “ These things are written, that

³ John x. 38.

ye might believe." Let all wavering minds but consider a little his admirable works in the world : Was it known from the beginning? yea, since the world began it was not heard, that ever any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.¹ Nicodemus saith, "Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man could do these miracles that thou doest, except God were with him²." Nay, that which is more, Nicodemus ! none could do them except God were in him, and he in God. To manifest that he had power in earth to forgive sinners, he says unto the sick of the palsy no more but this in curing him, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." To confirm that he was the bread of life, he feeds a great multitude with five barley loaves and two fishes³; which he blessed, and his apostles distributed. To show that he had power over sea and land, he commands the waters and they obey him.⁴ To make evident proof that he was the light, he restores his seeing unto a blind man that craved it of him.⁵ To declare plainly that he was the resurrection from the dead, he raised Lazarus, who had lain four days in his grave.⁶ For his divine power in working miracles—we know that the magicians of Egypt did some wonders before

¹ John ix. 32.² John iii. 2.³ John vi. 9.⁴ Matt. viii. 26.⁵ Luke xviii. 43.⁶ John xi. 43.

Pharaoh⁷, but they came not near to Moses' doings, for they were but slender illusions; yet Moses' miracles came far behind these of our Saviour; they were so many, they were so wonderful, as none but God could effect them.

2. And this order did our Saviour Christ observe; that from his doctrine he proceeded to show miracles, that if his words could not prevail, yet his works might. By which works it was evident how willing he was to heal our infirmities, and how able to help all that were distressed, and consequently all that still call upon him in time of need. And to this end, in the first place, serve his miracles to show his power and goodness; and that there is no disease so desperate which he by his only word cannot cure; that there is none so miserable whom he will exclude, who excludes none.

Jehoshaphat the king when he was at a great strait, and knew not what to do, at last resolved upon this⁸, Ask counsel of the Lord, I pray thee; as if he should say, I will go seek help of God; when we know not what to do, or which way to turn us for help, we may resolve upon this, We will go to Christ, he was merciful on earth, and showed many miracles in helping all that came unto

⁷ Exod. vii. 22.

⁸ 1 Kings xxii. 5.

him, and he is the same still, sitting at the right hand of God in heaven.

3. But now observe we the manner of his working miracles. At one time he speaketh the word only¹; at another, he toucheth the diseased²; sometimes he cures in presence, at another time being far absent³; in some he is lifting up his eyes to heaven; in others, he prayeth openly: All which want not a mystery, and appertain as well to the instruction of our faith, as the direction of our life, and are as part of the Gospel; because they show unto us good and joyful things.⁴ When the prophets wrought miracles, they were always praying⁵: but we hear Christ commanding, and speaking the word only, and it is done. He commandeth the winds, and the seas; by his word he chargeth diseases to cease, devils to depart. Unto the leper he saith, "I will; be thou clean:" Unto the man that lay by the pool of Bethesda, "Take up thy bed and walk⁶;" Unto the widow's son, "Young man, arise:" for unto those to whom he gave remedy, he oftentimes enjoined a duty.

The Church story doth mention a certain letter written by one Agbarus⁷, an Edesseean, unto our Saviour Christ, the form whereof

¹ Matt. viii. 13.

³ Matt. viii. 13.

⁵ 1 Kings xvii. 21.

⁷ Euseb. lib. i. c. 14.

² Matt. ix. 24.

⁴ 2 Kings iv. 35.

⁶ John v. 18.

was this:—"Agbarus the Edesseean, to Jesus the good Saviour in the country of Jewry, &c. It is showed unto me, that thou and thy disciples do give health to mortal men, without herbs or medicines: for as the fame goes of thee, thou dost bring to pass that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, that thou dost cast out foul spirits, and even raisest some dead amongst the people. When I heard these things of thee, I began to conceive this, that either thou wert God, or at the least the Son of God, come down from heaven." In this we see that the miracles of our Saviour make the world to stand amazed at him, and the faithful to believe on him.

4. In the second of St. John, when Christ had turned water into wine⁸, (for that was his first miracle who did turn sorrow into joy, the law into grace) the evangelist saith, "He began to show forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him:" for his miracles, they saw them and believed on him, we hear them and believe on him: "Blessed are they that believe, and have not seen."⁹ And what else doth the daily hearing of his divine miracles, but daily increase in us faith more and more?

The Jews reasoned within themselves, "If this man were a sinner he could not do these

⁸ John ii. 11.

⁹ John xx. 29.

things.”¹ And Christ himself saith for the removing of their incredulity:—“If I had not done the works which no other had done, they should have had no sin, but now they have no excuse.”

Some will say, Holy men of old wrought miracles: at the prayer of Joshua, the sun stood still²; Elijah and Elisha did many great and wonderful works.³ It is so indeed, (saith St. Austin,) but if you mark the manner, these were far inferior to Christ’s miracles⁴; these wrought by prayer, Christ by his own power: they as holy men, he by authority as God: they, when they raised one from the dead, did no more, Christ did many and of all sorts. It was but his word, and his deed, unto the blind man, “Receive thy sight.”⁵

5. Compare we a little Christ’s miracles with the testimonies of the prophets long before his coming: “He hath given medicine to heal our infirmities.⁶ The eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf are opened, the lame shall leap as a hart, the dead men shall live, then shall he preach the acceptable year;” all which accord with his miracles in the Gospel.

Our Saviour upbraideth the cities of Bethsaida, and Chorazin, wherein he wrought many miracles, which were so perspicuous testimo-

¹ John xv. 24.

² Josh. x. 12.

³ 2 Kings ii. 8.

⁴ 1 Kings xvii. 22.

⁵ Luke xviii. 42.

⁶ Isa. xxxv. 5.

nies of his Deity, that if they had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented sitting in sackcloth and ashes.⁷ Why did the Pharisees so much envy our Saviour, but for his glorious works, for which they should have loved him? never did they pursue him more eagerly than when he had now lately raised Lazarus from the dead.⁸ Those who scorned him upon the cross, could out of their own mouths judge themselves, "He saved others."⁹

6. For these miracles of our Saviour, they ceased not in him, either alive or dead. See what his power did: he was crowned with thorns, and now kings and emperors do cast down their crowns at his feet. What a death was that which did such things, which all the living could not do! by weakness he overcame power.

Twelve fishermen in short time subdued the world unto him, by suffering and teaching men to suffer, by dying and teaching men to die. He wrought miracles in himself, and (as he before promised) he wrought by his power miracles in his apostles. He cured a woman that touched the hem of his vesture¹⁰; and Peter cured divers by his very shadow¹¹:

⁷ Matt. xi. 21.

⁸ John xi. 48.

⁹ Luke xxiii. 35.

¹⁰ Matt. ix. 21.

¹¹ Acts v. 15.

“ Verily I say unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater than these shall he do.”¹ Whence we see what was done in believing on his name. The primitive Church had many miracles; trees newly planted are wont to require watering, but having once taken root, that labour ceaseth. We rejoice, (saith Thomas Aquinas) that we are past the beginnings to require signs again²: Now the faith of Jesus Christ is established in our hearts, dumb and deaf flesh is not opened, but the dumb and deaf heart, by the operation of his word: neither is Christ still without miracles.

He raised three from the dead, and so doth he still three sorts of dead sinners.

The first was the ruler’s daughter, whom he raised, putting forth the multitude, in the presence only of her parents³: these are those whom he raiseth from secret sins, known only to God and themselves.

The second was the widow’s son, which was now carrying forth of the city, and Christ met him by the way, and raised him⁴: these are those who are going on in an evil course to the pit of destruction, but Christ happily meets them, preventing them with his grace:

¹ John xiv. 12.

³ Matt. ix. 24.

² Tho. in Epist. Joh.

⁴ Luke vii. 11.

being delivered to their mother the church, they become new men, and so live.

The third was Lazarus, who had been four days dead, and Christ comes and weepeth, groaneth, and calleth at the sepulchre, "Lazarus, come forth."⁵ These are those that have lain long in their sins, and begin to savour; for these Christ groaneth and weepeth, and these he calleth by his grace at their dead hearts, ready to restore them to life; and at last they revive; and when Christ raiseth these he works a miracle indeed: And yet blessed be his name! for he often works this miracle. In the time of Elisha the child sneezed seven times that was raised from death⁶; they leave seven capital sins that Christ thus raiseth to life.

7. By these six works of mercy, Christ wrought miracles upon the body, and by those six also doth he work miracles upon the soul: blindness is ignorance and error; lameness is infirmity and waywardness of the will; leprosy is concupiscence of the flesh; deafness is obduration of the heart; the separation of grace from the soul is death; poverty is the defect or want of knowledge of God. The poor receive the Gospel; some are blind by ignorance, these he illuminateth by the light of faith; some are lame by imperfec-

⁵ John xi. 43.

⁶ 2 Kings iv. 35.

tion, these he enableth by the strength of hope; some are lepers by contagion of sin, these he cleanseth by the merits of his death; some are hardened by the obduration of heart, these he waketh by the calling of his word; some are dead by reason of sinful life, these he raiseth in the inward man to a spiritual life; some are needy and destitute of help, these he adorneth and clotheth with grace.

Christ (as was before showed) reproacheth those cities of unbelief, wherein his miracles were done, by a woe: "Woe be unto thee, Chorazin,—woe be unto thee, Bethsaida¹;" by Chorazin may be understood the state of rich men; by Capernaum, of carnal men; by Bethsaida, the wise men of the world. Some of these miracles doth Christ work in Bethsaida, in Chorazin, in Capernaum; these should have believed, but did not; these ought to believe, but do not. The men of the old world were overwhelmed in the flood for their sins; when they had no other law, nature was a law unto them: and of the heathen the Apostle saith, that the "invisible things of him, that is, his eternal power and godhead, are seen by the creation of the world²," being considered in his works; to the intent they should be without excuse, be-

¹ Matt. xi. 21.

² Rom. i. 20.

cause that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God. But what should we speak of miracles? If we open our eyes and look abroad into the world, there we see them. If we enter into a consideration of ourselves, there we find them. The Jews required a sign of Christ, when they saw nothing but signs from him.³ Paulus Sergius in the Acts saw but one miracle of Paul the Apostle wrought upon another, and by-and-by he received Paul's preaching.⁴ We see not one, but many miracles, wrought not on others, but upon ourselves. Christ began to upbraid the cities wherein his miracles were done; he "began," as if he doth still the same. But to the use.

8. A diligent consideration of Christ's miracles doth offer up unto our religious thoughts many things worthy of observation, as first, they move to give prayer and glory unto God. So did the Israelites when they saw themselves delivered by a miracle in the Red sea⁵; so did the people in the Gospel, when with astonishment they cried out, "We never saw it on this fashion: he hath done all things well, he hath made the blind to see, and the lame to go."⁶ When tenacity is brought to be liberal, then a withered hand

³ Matt. xii. 38.

⁴ Acts xiii. 12.

⁵ Exod. xv. 1.

⁶ Mark vii. 37.

is restored; when the means of believing are given, the blind and the dumb in soul are cured¹; when a sinner is brought from going astray², and now called from an evil custom of life, then the deaf hear; when a sinner is converted, one dead is raised: and for these miracles we give glory unto God. Secondly, they teach us to have recourse unto him in all times of necessity; for when we see him full of pity and compassion, we learn not to despair, but to trust in Christ. When we see he can feed whole multitudes in the desert, where otherwise there was little hope of succour, we learn how powerful he is to relieve. Thirdly, these and the consideration of them may serve as an invincible truth, for the confirmation of our faith. The Centurion said, "Surely this was the Son of God."³

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of Christ's most divine wisdom in answering his adversaries, and all that come unto him, and what we learn thereby.

To come in the next place from his doings to his sayings, wherein such was the divine wisdom

¹ Chrys. hom. 41. in Matt.

² Luke xv. 31.

³ Matt. xxvii. 54.

of the Son of God, that it moved all that heard him unto admiration. When he was disputing in the Temple, the doctors were "astonished at his understanding⁴;" when he exhorted the multitude, the people were "amazed at his doctrine⁵;" when some should have apprehended him, they say, "Never man spake as this man speaketh."⁶ And now, behold a greater than Solomon.⁷ In the two-and-twentieth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel⁸, the Herodians were sent by the Pharisees, they thinking that men unknown unto him might sooner entrap him; that he would not so much beware of these as themselves, men known unto him. These Herodians came with a question of tribute, after this manner: "Master, thou teachest the way of God truly, and carest not for man; how sayest thou, Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar?" They call him master, when they mean nothing less than to be instructed by him. They praise him, (saith St. Chrysostom⁹,) when their intent is to entrap him; as flatterers are wont when they would draw men whither they list. We know (as if they would say) thy sincerity is such, thou sparest none; no, not Cæsar himself. Tell us, thy know-

⁴ Luke ii. 48.

⁶ John vii. 46.

⁸ Matt. xxii. 16.

⁵ Matt. vii. 28.

⁷ Matt. xii. 42.

⁹ Chrys. in Matt. hom.

ledge is such, as thou canst soon resolve us. Christ perceived well enough this sleight proceeding, refuseth their praise, reproacheth their hypocrisy, and, calling for a tribute penny, bids them go and do their duty unto Cæsar as they ought to do; for that very inscription of Cæsar's did show them as much.

These men being answered, the Sadducees came unto him with a captious question¹, putting the case of a woman which had seven husbands; now to which of these should she appertain in the resurrection? If unto any one of them, then injury was offered unto the rest, which was evil; if unto all, then must he admit a plurality,—polygamy, which was worse: and therefore they thought by this subtle kind of question, to have strongly inferred against the resurrection, and to have grounded our Saviour at first dash. Christ soon disappoints them of their purpose, which they missed of; and by-and-by shows them they erred, not knowing the Scriptures, that the resurrection was not to be considered with any carnal conceit; that there was neither marrying nor giving unto marriage, for they were as the angels of God in heaven. By which answer they were at a nonplus.

¹ Matt. xxii. 25.

The text saith, they were put to silence, as if now they had no more to say.

2. After this, a Doctor of the Law asketh him "which was the greatest commandment in the Law²?" a question at that very time in controversy amongst them, concerning the precepts of the law, moral, judicial, and ceremonial. Christ comprehends all in brief, as Solomon did when he said, "The sum of all is to fear God, and to keep the commandments³;"—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; this is the first and the greatest commandment; the second is like unto this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;" thereby showing him that the scope of the commandments did tend principally to love; and in this love God did chiefly require the very affections of the heart; and therefore that they should not so much busy their heads about needless questions, as apply their hearts to keep the precepts of the law, which in a generality did consist in the love of our God, and the love of our neighbour: of God, with all the mind, and so forth; of our neighbour, as ourselves.

3. In the eighth of St. John, the Scribes and Pharisees bring him a woman taken in adultery, and set her in the midst, saying,

² Matt. xxii. 36.

³ Eccles. xii. 13.

“Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses commandeth in the law, that such should be stoned, what sayest thou therefore? This they said to tempt him.”¹ If he should have condemned her, then, Where is that mercy that all the world speaks of to be in thee? If he should not have condemned her, then, Lo, thou art clean contrary unto Moses’s law. Thus by a dilemma they thought to catch him. Christ sounds the secrets of their hearts, and willeth them, after examination of themselves, to proceed to execute the sentence of Moses’s law upon the woman; by which divine answer, they all stand mute and confounded in themselves; finding not where to reprove him, they slink away: Which answer, saith St. Austin, was just and gentle, “Let this sinner be punished, but not of sinners.”² When some other of the Scribes said within themselves, He blasphemeth; who can forgive sins, but God only? Christ knowing their thoughts, saith, “Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or Arise, take up thy bed and walk³,” here first, saith Tertullian, he sheweth he was the Son of man.⁴

4. In the sixth of St. Luke, a diseased man

¹ John viii. 4.

² Puniatur peccatrix, sed non a peccatoribus.

³ Tert. lib. 5. adver. Marcio.

⁴ Subsequent editions read ‘Son of God.’—Ed.

is brought unto him upon the sabbath day⁵: not to heal him were want of compassion; but yet to heal him were to give occasion to the Pharisees of murmuring against him: Murmur or not murmur, Christ doth the poor man good upon the sabbath day, and shows them the end thereof: That the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath. In the twenty-second of the same gospel, Pilate the judge asketh him, "If he were the Son of God⁶;" Christ's answer is, "Thou hast said it⁷," neither affirming or denying of himself: and at another time being asked the same question of the chief priests and elders, he is silent; to show that we should seek consolation in patience, and that sometimes silence is the best answer, "He is accused," saith St. Austin, "and is silent, and well is he silent who needs no defence."⁸ When he was in the Temple, the same chief priests and elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority?"⁹ For Christ's authority to teach in the Temple, there is found this history¹⁰: In the temple of Jerusalem there were twenty-two ordinary priests, and as soon as any of them died, the residue

⁵ Luke vi. 6. ⁶ Luke xxiii. 3. ⁷ Matt. xxvii. 12.

⁸ Accusatur et tacet; bene tacet qui defensione non eget.
— *Aug. Ser. de Tep.* cxvi.

⁹ Matt. xxi. 23.

¹⁰ Ludolph. in Vit. Christ.

chose another in his place ; now it happened that Jesus, for his singular doctrine and godliness, was chosen to be one ; and there is great likelihood that this should be true¹, considering that Jesus at this time and other times did preach in the temple, which thing the pride of the Pharisees would otherwise have hardly endured ; and therefore we perceive at this time, they did not long stand about denying his authority. Christ asketh them another question : "The baptism of John, whence was it ; from heaven, or of men ? Then they reasoned among themselves, saying, If we shall say from heaven, he will say unto us, Why did you not believe him ? and if we say of men, we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet ; then they answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell ; and he said unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

5. The like question to this, proposed he at another time unto the Pharisees, saying,

¹ This is one of the many traditions to which, though founded on no acknowledged historical truth, credit seems once to have been generally given through Christendom. The work of Ludolph of Saxony, called *The Life of Christ*, an edition of which was published at Paris, 1509, to which Dr. Sutton refers, abounds throughout with legends equally apocryphal with this. It appears not to have occurred to those who transmitted this tradition, that the priests in the temple were taken not from the tribe of Judah, from whom our blessed Lord was descended, but exclusively from the tribe of Levi.—ED.

“What think ye of Christ, whose son is he?”² They said unto him, David’s.”³ He said unto them, “How doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool: If then David call him Lord, how is he then his Son?”⁴ And they could not answer him, neither durst they from that day forth ask him any more questions.”⁵ Thus whether our Saviour Christ were answering or opposing the Pharisees, they saw his divine wisdom, such as they could not but wonder at: and no marvel, seeing he was the divine wisdom of the Father himself.

When the Jews objected unto him, that he cast out devils by the power of Beelzebub⁶, First, he asketh them, by whose power then did their children cast them out? Secondly, he sheweth their great error or malice, in objecting this against him; for if he by the power of Beelzebub could cast out devils, then was Satan divided against himself: if so, then could not his power stand, and therefore the sum of our Saviour’s answer was this, “Who-soever casteth out devils, the same is clean opposite or contrary unto Satan: but I, as you see, cast them out; it followeth therefore contrary unto your assertion, that I do this

² Mark xii. 35.

³ Luke xx. 41.

⁴ Ps. cx. 1.

⁵ Matt. xxii. 46.

⁶ Luke xii. 15.

not by the power of Satan, but by a power opposite unto his ;” and thus they saw themselves snared in their own snare : “And in the trap,” as the prophet speaketh, “they laid for others, is their own foot taken.” In the twelfth of St. Luke, when one said, Master, speak unto my brother to divide the inheritance with me ; Christ saith, Man, who made me a judge ? Though he were a judge both of quick and dead, yet he refused to judge in a private inheritance, to show that his first coming was not to judge, but to be judged. This notwithstanding, Christians may be judges in matters of controversy as the apostle requireth.¹

6. In the thirteenth of the same gospel, he went through all cities and towns teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem ; then said one unto him, “Lord, are there few that shall be saved ?”² And he said unto them, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate :” This man asketh of a high mystery only known unto God, about which he needed not have troubled his head : Christ answered not to what he asked, whether there were few or no ; but to what he ought to ask, to wit, of entering in at the strait gate ; and therefore willet all that heard him to strive to enter in at that gate. For questions, or questioning in need-

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 3.

² Luke xiii. 23.

less or intricate matters, Christ saith unto his own apostles, "It is not for you to know or to search into the secrets of his counsel, whose counsel is unsearchable."³ We should praise God in those things we know, and wonder at him in those things we know not: he hath not given any man leave to press too boldly, too nearly into the privy chamber of his divine majesty. Concerning the number of the elect, or who they are, is more than man should meddle withal: we know not how soon God in his endless mercy may call those, whom we are often over-prone to pronounce as vessels of wrath. For such depths—curiosity is it to examine, presumption to determine, impossibility to conclude, want of charity to censure. While God doth afford time of amendment and space of turning unto him, what should we but in Christianity hope the best? When Peter said unto Christ, "Lord, what shall he do?"⁴ Christ answereth, "What if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." Hearken unto that which doth appertain unto thyself; and let that alone which in the determinate purpose of God doth appertain unto others. St. Austin sheweth, that it hath been the manner of busy heads in all ages, (because they would not be idle, and specially of the Mani-

³ Acts i. 7.⁴ John xxi. 22.

chees,) to bring themselves unto a labyrinth of a number of unnecessary questions¹: as it is the manner of many now-a-days, unto whom these answers of our Saviour before mentioned are sufficient. When Pilate asketh, What is truth? Christ answereth not. He would not show what was truth (saith one) to a despiser of truth.²

7. When the young man said unto Christ, "Good master," &c. our Saviour saith, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but only God." A strange answer we would think! Why, Lord, thou art God only, and therefore well might he say unto thee, Good; but when we consider the matter thoroughly, we shall perceive that Christ in this answer had reference to that which this young man thought of him, not what he was; esteeming him only some good and just man, and no more. Again, we are taught by this answer to turn away the eyes of our mind, when we are praised of others and thought to be good of men, saying with ourselves, we are not worthy to be called good: "There is none good but God." Judith³, when she was praised of the people, turned their praise to the praising of God: so the blessed Virgin did, as hath been said; when she was magnified, her soul did magnify the Lord; others magnified her, but

¹ Aug. in Gen. ad Lit.

² Matt. xix. 17.

³ Judith xvi. 2.

she God.⁴ In these and many other answers of our Saviour to those that came unto him, look how many answers, so many instructions have we, both for the strengthening of our faith, and the direction of our life: "By plain scriptures," saith St. Austin⁵, "we are fed, by harder exercised."

Now in Christ's most divine answers we learn these things:—

8. First, in that he so answered the chief Pharisees, that they could not tell which way to turn them, it might make them well reason, Whence is this wisdom? as if he should say, Surely it is not of man. St. Jérôme saith, "They who should have believed at so great wisdom, only marvelled that their subtleties of deceiving took not place; and so they left him, remaining still in infidelity and hardness of heart."⁶ O senseless men, have you not heard with your ears the mighty power of God? Instead of reverencing him for his wisdom, how could you find in your hearts to speak evil of him? The woman of Samaria having but a little communed with him by the well-side, leaveth her water-pot, and going into the city, saith, "Behold, a man that hath told me all that ever I did, is not he the very Christ?"⁷

⁴ Luke i. 46.

⁵ *Apertis pascimur, obscuris exercemur.*—*Aug. de Ver. Dom. Serm. ii.*

⁶ *Qui ad tantam sapientiam credere deberent, mirati sunt quod caliditas eorum insidiandi locum non invenit.*

⁷ *John iv. 29.*

9. Secondly, for the direction of our life, we learn by this of our Saviour, to have respective care in answering others, sometimes as he did by silence, and sometimes also as St. Peter speaketh¹, being ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us; which our Saviour did observe with such coldness and moderation, as he caused his gainsayers to be confounded in themselves. This in part also he exhorteth, when he willeth his disciples to be as simple as doves and wise as serpents.² In consideration of both these manners of instruction, we may reply with that of St. Peter, when Christ said, "Whom say ye that I am?"³ Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," as if he should have said, "The prophets have foretold us of Messias to come: Lord, thou art he."

CHAPTER XXV.

Of Christ our Saviour, what he did upon the Sabbath, and festival days, and what Christians may hence gather, for the observation of the same.

FOR the better keeping in a religious remembrance from age to age some special

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 15. ² Matt. x. 16. ³ Matt. xvi. 16.

benefits received, as also for the necessary rest of man, sometimes to be at leisure from bodily labours and travails of this life—so it was that Almighty God did permit, nay, expressly enjoin his people to the keeping of the sabbath⁴, and the solemn observation of other festival times and seasons; both which might be as memorials of some public benefit received from him, and also testimonies of the care he had in particular of man's infirmity in general.

In this keeping the solemn observation of the sabbath, and other festival seasons of joy and rests, the people for their parts might not only call to remembrance God's goodness past; but also direct their desires to the obtaining of a future rest to come: when this observation here in earth did, as it were, put them in mind of that joyful sabbath, and festival solemnity, they should one day keep (by the grace of God) in the kingdom of heaven. For very fitly do the fasts which are appointed to go before the feasts, signify our condition in the life present, but the feasts themselves our happy estate, to be enjoyed in the life to come.

2. As concerning the sabbath, as also the observation of other festival times and seasons⁵, (for every feast was in a generality

⁴ Lev. xxiii. 1.

⁵ Theoph. in Serm. Luc.

called a sabbath) we find both continued all along until the coming of our Saviour Christ, who did also himself ratify the lawful use thereof by his own example upon the Sabbath days : he was often teaching in the synagogue of the Jews ¹; and at other festival times, he resorteth unto Jerusalem ², as we find in the Gospel, there to keep (after the manner and ancient custom of the people of God) their feasts appointed unto them to be kept by the ordinance of God himself.³ Of this ordinance we read in the three-and-twentieth of Leviticus, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The feasts of the Lord which you call holy assemblies, even these are my feasts."⁴ There, mention is made of the Sabbath, the passover, the feast of unleavened bread, the feast of first fruits, the feast of tabernacles : concerning all which, Moses not only mentioneth, that God will have these observed, but also setteth down in particular, with what circumstances, and the manner how.

3. When as now in the first table of the law ⁵, God had mentioned both his external and internal worship in the two former pre-

¹ Luke vi. 5.

² John v. 1.

³ John xii. 12.

⁴ Lev. xxiii. 2.

⁵ Exod. xx. 1—4.

cepts thereof, and in the third place placed reverence and honour to be done unto his holy name: that there might also be a sanctified time, separated from others, for the observation of these holy duties, therefore in the fourth commandment doth he command a sanctified and holy time; to show that as he had given laws for his worship, so would he also ordain a time for his worship: which time he would have to be holy: which holiness he would have to resemble his own rest, the seventh day sanctified by him,—his rest,—so called in that he ceased the seventh day; as it is said, he rested, or ceased from the creation of the world. And this commandment God setteth down in many words; as if he were the longer expressing it, to teach his people to be the more careful in the observing of it. The other laws were only negative, but this is both negative and affirmative, not only showing what we should do, but what we should not do. “Thou shalt keep holy, and remember that thou keep holy, thou shalt not labour⁶,” and so forth, as is expressed in the law. When the prophets would show either wherein a people did honour God, or otherwise did dishonour him, they sometimes mention it in keeping and violating of the sabbath; wherefore Isaiah saith, “Blessed is the man that

⁶ Exod. xx. 4, 5.

keepeth the sabbath.”¹ And when the prophet Ezekiel would show how the people had cast off all reverence of God, he mentioneth it in this phrase of speech, “They have polluted my sabbaths.”²

4. What our Saviour determineth concerning this³, (who came not to break the law, but to fulfil it,) we may easily perceive. That part of the sabbath which was otherwise ceremonial, we acknowledge to cease, but for the law moral, that still to remain the same,—that God may still have a sanctified time, consecrated before others unto his worship; and man a vacation from bodily labours, as agreeable to the condition of his estate, which doth require rest. Mention is often made in the Gospel, what our Saviour did upon the sabbath days, besides his teaching; he cured many that came unto him, and had much ado with the Pharisees in showing them their superstitious observation of the same.⁴ The right use whereof he most truly observed in doing so many sanctified works therein⁵, in curing diseased creatures⁶; which the rulers of the synagogue could not brook.

In the fifth of St. John he bids the man that had long time lain by the pool’s side, to

¹ Isa. lvi. 2.

³ Matt. v. 17.

⁵ Matt. xii. 9.

² Ezek. xx. 16.

⁴ Luke vi. 6.

⁶ Mark iii. 1.

take up his bed and walk⁷, “Now this (saith the evangelist) was the sabbath day.” If the man had not been cured, how could he have borne his bed, who was before borne of others?⁸ If it had not been upon the sabbath day, haply there had not been so many eye-witnesses of the power of God. In curing another upon the same day, Christ took occasion to show the end of the sabbath⁹, which was, that it was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: as also to manifest the works of the sabbath, what they were, and of what nature,—to do good upon this day, were it but to a dumb creature; and the Pharisees did not amiss in lifting out an ox, or an ass from the ditch upon this day: but how much more was it agreeable unto the sanctifying of the sabbath to help a distressed man, and to loose one whom Satan hath bound, lo, many years?

For the superstitious observation of the sabbath, which the Jews used, it grew, as we may perceive by our Saviour’s discourse with them, from very ignorance of the very first institution. It was not said, “Thou shalt celebrate the sabbath with rest;” but “Thou shalt sanctify; or thou shalt keep the sabbath with a holy rest.”

Again, to show that charity, which is the

⁷ John v. 9.

⁸ Ambro. de fide, lib. iv. c. 3. Sanatis jam mandabat officium.

⁹ Matt. xii. 9.

sum of the law in general, is to be preferred before any law in particular (for I will have mercy and not sacrifice, saith the Lord).¹ Christ our Saviour, as we see, chiefly aimed at doing good upon the sabbath day. Secretly to intervent thy neighbour, or openly to envy a poor man's health, was with the Pharisees no breach of the sabbath: but to do good upon him,—the sabbath is broken: for the kindling of fire, but chiefly the gathering of sticks, was it not punished in a very high degree²? and therefore not the least action to be done upon the sabbath day! These men considered not how the first institution required strictness, which in that instance is manifest, for the deterring of others. Contempt is one thing, necessity is another, which Christ showed in excusing his apostles, when they were murmured at for plucking the ears of corn upon the sabbath day.³ The ignorance of the Pharisees did cleave only to the letter of the law⁴: Christ addeth a favourable dispensation, and confirms what he had done. He that cured me said, Take up thy bed and walk, or he that bid me, will bear me out in that I do: He said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk.⁵

5. Doubtless with great religion did the

¹ Hos. vi. 6.

² Numb. xv. 36.

³ Luke vi. 3.

⁴ 1 Sam. xxi. 6.

⁵ John v. 10.

old Israelites well observe and keep the holy sabbath of the Lord, which day God himself sanctified from the beginning⁶: as this day Noah in the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat; as this day the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, when they rested from the oppression of Pharaoh⁷; as this day the people brought in Christ into Jerusalem with palm boughs, a little before his passion⁸; as this day showed he his first miracle in Cana in Galilee⁹; as this day after all his miracles rested he in the sepulchre¹⁰, gloriously arising from the dead the day following, which day by the constitution of the apostles themselves (and so authors against whom no exception can be taken), the Church celebrateth unto this day as her Christian sabbath of our Lord.¹¹ This is called by St. John, our Lord's day, from the resurrection¹²: concerning the alteration hereof the prophet Hosea might seem to speak when he saith, "I will cause their sabbaths and feasts to cease."¹³ The day of our Lord, saith St. Austin, which we keep as our sabbath, is not only a remembrance of his resurrection past, but a type and figure of that eternal sabbath which is to come¹⁴: The alteration therefore in one part is as thus: "They did celebrate their sabbath with a re-

⁶ Gen. viii. 4.⁷ Exod. xii. 41.⁸ Luke xix. 37.⁹ John ii. 11.¹⁰ Matt. xxviii. 1.¹¹ Acts xx. 7.¹² Rev. i. 10.¹³ Hos. ii. 11.¹⁴ *Aug. de Civit. Dei*, lib. ii.

membrance of the creation, we of the resurrection; they as a figure of grace, when they should rest from the servitude of sin, we as a figure of glory, when we shall rest from occasions of sinning."

6. Eusebius showeth us of certain men called the Ebionites, which would keep the sabbath with the Jews, and the Sunday with the Christians, like men who would be of all religions when they are indeed of none.¹ Others tell us of the Petrobrussiani², a kind of men which would have no solemn and sanctified feasts to the honour of God at all. The Jews were not so superstitious, as these were irreligious. These men are gone, but yet their fancies in some part remain; for the former, to wit, the superstitious manner of the Jews in keeping their sabbath, we see it refuted by our Saviour; and the right use to be kept how and after what manner. The question hath been moved, whether the Maccabees did well in violating the sabbath?³ the question rightly proposed is otherwise: Whether the Maccabees in fighting that day did violate the sabbath? Many began to wax scrupulous; Mattathias, a good and godly captain, saw it was no time to stand upon points; that now they

¹ Euseb. lib. iii. c. 27.

² This sect, who were followers of Peter de Bruys, arose at the beginning of the 12th century. Mosheim, cent. 12. c. 5. gives a brief account of them.—Eb.

³ 1 Macc. ii. 34.

must either fight it out like men, or be murdered like beasts: [not] to be hampering upon nice matters of the law; when the enemies of God were ready to destroy the law and them, he thought good to defend themselves, and offend their enemies; which was approved, the case standing as it did.

For the sabbath day's journey, which consisted as some say of two miles' distance (for that the people placed their tents or their uttermost parts thereof so far from the tabernacle, or that mount Olivet was about that distance from Jerusalem, whither the people on that day might repair⁴), the discussing hereof is not so necessary for the travail of physicians, or any in case of necessity; so it be not ordinary upon this day. In the Christian observation of our sabbath to stand upon a number of curious conceits is without judgment and learning, and in part pharisaical. It were to be wished that a serious and religious observation thereof were in use without farther frivolous devices of running fanciers.

There are other days for our vocation, the holy sabbath is of our vacation to God; the people upon other days offered a lamb, but upon the sabbath two lambs were offered, as if that day our devotion should be doubled.⁵ Every day would David worship God, yea, and seven times a day would he call upon

⁴ Acts i. 12.

⁵ Numb. xxviii. 9.

him¹; this is the day wherein we should call upon God more than ordinary; a day of prayer and meditation, of reconciling ourselves to God and man, of doing good and sanctifying a holy time with holy conversation: therefore called the Lord's day, because the Lord should chiefly be worshipped upon this day.

7. For the observation, in the second place, of festival times and seasons, it hath been before showed that Christ our Saviour himself went often unto the feasts: a little before his passion his disciples came unto him, saying, "Master, where wilt thou that we prepare the passover²?" as if they knew it was their Master's manner to keep the feast now approaching. For the feasts of the Jews there is no question; as they were commanded of God, so were they ever solemnly kept of the godly. As they had their feasts, so have Christians theirs. "Christ our passover is offered for us, therefore (saith the apostle) let us keep the feast."³ They had a passover, and we have a passover too: they were delivered out of the bondage of Egypt, and we are delivered from a bondage too: they kept a solemn remembrance, and we have as much cause as ever they had to keep a solemn remembrance too. By their feast of the first fruits⁴, the fiftieth day after the passover, they

¹ Ps. cxix. 164.

² Matt. xxvi. 17.

³ 1 Cor. v. 7.

⁴ Lev. xxiii. 19.

held a holy assembly unto God, we who have received the first fruits of the Spirit by the coming down of the Holy Ghost, at the feast of Pentecost, upon the apostles, hold a holy assembly unto the Lord also. The other of our Christian feasts which concern the chief points of our redemption, as the Birth of Christ, his Circumcision, the Epiphany, and his Resurrection from the dead, have so good use in the Church, as the ancient custom and Christian manner of the best and best-learned that have lived since the apostles' time, is of more sufficiency to make us continue the godly use thereof, than all that the devisers of novelties are wont to say, to draw us [by] forced texts to the contrary.

Satan is subtle, and never more than when he is changed into an angel of light. To take away a solemn remembrance of him who shed his blood for our redemption; to pass over the memory of his birth, without any solemn and religious observation, were the next way to make both duty and love wax cold in Christians, and by little and little to forget all, (which we may tremble to think) Christ Jesus and all. Wherefore we cannot but muse whereunto that strange spirit did tend, which is ready to control every Christian constitution, which eagerly sought the eversion of our solemn and Christian feasts.

These we keep (saith St. Austin¹), lest unthankfulness or forgetfulness should grow upon us; and therefore a sin is it for men to spend their time, and trouble the quiet of the Church, in seeking to overthrow the Christian use of solemn and seemly observations. By our feasts (saith Tertullian², speaking in the behalf of Christians against the heathen,) we sanctify unto God the memory of his benefits. Epiphanius taxeth Arius for denying Christian solemnities³: They have little in them, except boldness, which charge us that our ancient solemnities do come within the compass of St. Paul's reprehension, "You observe times and seasons⁴:" No, no, there is no such matter; they are far from fatal surmises of constellations, or any other heathenish rites. There is no such fear, God be praised, in these seemly observations; all the world doth see: wherefore unless we see them more strongly refuted than so, that is to say, by a few names for our feasts, there is no cause but the Church should still continue them in Christian manner as she doth, and so shall by the grace of God. Christ our Saviour himself hath honoured these times by his blessed birth, his resurrection, and ascension up into heaven; at which times

¹ Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. x. c. 4.

² Epiphanius. hom. 72.

³ Tertul. ad Psychic.

⁴ Gal. iv. 10.

we honour him, as at all times, so especially when we have feasts consecrated as public memorials of his love towards us. We keep these feasts with religious joy, while we remember him here on earth; the time will come (we hope) when we shall behold him with greater joy above in heaven.

8. Sometimes we celebrate the mention of the martyrs and saints of God, who have lived in former times; and this we do for no other end but only to set before us examples of repentance, of faith, of piety; and surely it is a mean to stir up in us a desire to follow the virtue of those saints whose memory we keep. Besides, occasion is offered of assembling ourselves in public prayer before God; which the oftener we do, the greater is our devotion. Abuse taken away, we see the keeping of saints' days is a commendable and Christian custom, according to that of St. Austin: "With a religious solemnity do Christian people celebrate the martyrs' memories."⁵ In these feasts honest recreation is allowed, which by a stoical kind of austerity to deny, is without judgment.

9. For the manner of keeping our Christian feasts of all sorts in general, first, our laud and praise is offered unto God; and therefore of the learned they are called in

⁵ Religiosa solemnitate populus Christianus celebrat memorias martyrum.

Hebrew, Kaggei, [days] "of rejoicing;" secondly, at these times we extend as we may, liberality unto others; and therefore, saith St. Austin, "Festival times would have liberality, which make many bless God for his benefits."¹ Last of all, our annual solemnities orderly observed, do sometimes call us away from the inordinate cark and care of the world; and move in our hearts many good and comfortable thoughts, in calling to mind the time will come, when we shall keep a Feast of feasts.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of Christ's weeping over Jerusalem, and what we learn thereby.

IT went not with the Son of God here in earth, as it did with king Solomon², who spent his time in great royalty in the world, or as it is said of Aristoxenus the philosopher, who led all his life amidst instruments of music. No, no, the world went far otherwise with the Son of God, who did often mourn and weep while he was conversant in the same.³ St. Luke tells us of his sad

¹ Aug. in Adven. Dom.

² 2 Chron. ix. 9.

³ Luke xix. 41.

journey towards Jerusalem, how he passed the way weeping, what small delight he took in the people's hosanna, or all the troop about him; for, as it is mentioned, while they were singing, he was mourning. He casts up his eyes to Jerusalem; beholding the city, he had compassion upon it, and wept for it: he wept for them which would not weep for themselves. David saith, "Mine eyes gush out with water, because men keep not thy law." Christ's eyes gushed out with watery tears, because they would not keep his law, nay, they would not accept his love: Jerusalem would not know the day of her visitation. He saw the city, and foresaw the ruin and misery of the same. And when he beheld the city, he wept for it, foreshowing the desolation thereof, which would be lamentable; this he doth, not so much with words as with tears.

2. The prophets of old have sometimes spoken unto the sons of men by sorrowful signs.⁴ Samuel, when he would manifest how Saul's kingdom should be rent from him, having the lap of his coat in his hand rent it in the midst. Ezekiel⁵, to show the destruction of the people, takes a brick, and layeth it before them, and pourtrays upon it

⁴ 1 Sam. xv. 27.

⁵ Ezek. iv. 1.

the city, even Jerusalem, and layeth siege against it.

Christ at this time spake never a word to the same city, but yet his tears prophesied of sorrow to come; he came near the city, not so much in motion, as in commiseration. David wept for Absalom, saying, "Absalom, Absalom, O my son Absalom, I would to God I had died for thee."¹ Christ did as much mourn for Jerusalem, as even David did for Absalom:—Jerusalem, Jerusalem, I would to God I had died for thee! no, Jerusalem, I am now going to die for thee; O what should I do unto thee, that I have not done? Many a time came Christ toward Jerusalem, but he never came weeping as now he did, because Jerusalem was never so near desolation and ruin, as now it was; and therefore Christ never sorrowed more than now, when as they were now nearest destruction.

Was it for the overthrow of the walls and goodly buildings that Christ wept? No, it was for the sins of the men of Jerusalem, which should be the cause of all this. What affection was this of Christ, the eternal Son of God, to weep for sinful men! and not only that, but for those who sought to slay him

¹ 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

while he was seeking to save them. But when was Christ weeping? even when they were most rejoicing and laughing.

The physician most weeps when the frantic man most laugheth, because he knows then the danger is greatest, and therefore gives over to administer physic, leaving him to be lamented of his good friends.

3. "O that thou hadst known in this thy day those things that belong unto thy peace!" which words Christ uttered by-and-by, upon his weeping, with a kind of interrupted voice, and as it were for very sorrow, breaking off in the middle, by a manner of speech called *Aposiopesis*, when there was something more to be spoken, but very sorrow would not suffer him to utter it: "I weep, but, O Jerusalem, which art now rejoicing, if thou didst know the things which do belong unto thy peace, thou wouldest as well weep for thyself, as I do weep for thee. Thou hast had a day of peace, but there is a day coming full of sorrow and persecution. O Jerusalem, because thou wouldest not accept the one, thou art like shortly to rue the misery of the other." And thus hear we a mournful physician weeping for his wilful patient, which would not be healed, nor receive help, though it were offered with weeping and wailing; nor hear counsel, though it were given from a sighing heart, and tears falling down his

most precious cheeks, who was Lord of mercy.

4. The most doleful desolation that came upon this city, so mighty in prowess, so glorious in fame, so rich in all abundance, is set forth by those who have mentioned the tragical end which befel about the fortieth year after our Saviour suffered. The beholding of this made Eleazer, one of the inhabitants, at the very time to break out into this, or the like mournful oration¹, "O Jerusalem, thou great and goodly city of the world! where is now the beauty of Sion, the joy of the whole earth? where is thy glory, where is thy magnificence, O Jerusalem? Where is that Holy of Holies? where are thy priests who are attendant upon God as Angels? Where are thy sages, thy young men? O, from what glory art thou fallen, to what reproach and infamy! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! who can read with dry eyes, the most woful end of this city and people?"² They refused the Father and the Son; and God sent Titus and Vespasian, the father and son, that never left them until they were utterly

¹ Egisip. Jose.

² The reference in the edition of 1602 is obscure and uncertain, and later editions omit the references altogether. Josephus, in his Second Book of the Wars of the Jews, chap. 8, records the speech of Eleazer, to which, probably, allusion is here made.—ED.

defaced. O Jerusalem, strongly did thy enemies besiege thee, but thy sins did more strongly assault thee. They sold the Saviour of the world for thirty pence, and what followed in the captivity? thirty Jews were sold for a penny. The Lord Jesus was apprehended upon mount Olivet, and upon mount Olivet was Jerusalem first besieged. The Lord Jesus was crucified at the passover, and at the passover was Jerusalem sacked, and in such sort as the Romans themselves confessed, saying, That unless this people had offended the God of heaven, they could never have prevailed against them as they did. Their mortal enemy Titus could not but mourn at that sorrowful sight.

Thus have we heard of Christ's weeping over Jerusalem, and the cause which moved him thereunto; by which, without further application, we may consider, (as Gregory saith,) that their destruction is our admonition. When Scipio saw Carthage burn, he wept; being asked the cause why he wept, For that, saith he, I know not what shall become of Rome. And now who can but sorrow to see Jerusalem, sometime the garden of the world, come to utter desolation?

5. For three causes did Christ our Saviour weep, and at three several times. First, Christ wept that we should have, by so much the more, our hope and confidence in him, when we see him weeping; which proceeded

of mere compassion. Secondly, Christ wept, to teach us to weep and bewail our own misery. Thirdly, he wept, to show us when we should weep, even then when we think ourselves in greatest security; and therefore let us learn of him to weep for ourselves, who at this time (as we see) was weeping for others. Three times find we that Christ wept; first, in raising Lazarus,—there he bewailed man's misery; secondly, over Jerusalem,—there he bewailed man's security; thirdly, upon the cross,—there he bewailed man's infirmity. Christ mourned for the hardness of their hearts, whom neither promises in mercy, nor threatenings (and those in justice), could induce to acknowledge, in time, the day, and time of their visitation. If he were seen to weep in the presence of others, we may easily conceive that in the days of his flesh, he often “offered up groans,” as the Apostle speaketh, “with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to deliver him.”¹

6. What should we else learn by this weeping love of Christ, but to be ready to bring forth weeping commiseration for ourselves and others? Shall we see (saith Cassiodor.²) the prince himself weeping, and we in the mean time solace ourselves in pleasure? Is he a good child, that, beholding his father sit

¹ Heb. v. 7.

² Cassiod. Psal. l.

in sackcloth and ashes, will stand by, laughing and sporting as nothing moved? Shall the Son of God weep for thy sins, and wilt thou delight thyself in vain mirth? O Christian soul, mourn a little with Christ mourning. Those who had the sign (as we read in Ezekiel) were those that mourned for the abominations of the house of Israel³, and these were spared in time of punishment. "To whom," saith the Lord, "do I look, but unto the poor, and him which is of a contrite spirit?"⁴ Many causes have we which may move us to weep; first, in consideration of our own sins, and so may we say with Jeremiah, "O that our heads were a fountain of tears⁵!" secondly, for the sins of others; so St. Paul wept, when he wrote of those who were "enemies to the cross of Christ⁶;" nay, that which is more lamentable, enemies to their own salvation. It is said of Gregory Nazianzen, that he desired much some solitary place to be granted him, where he might spend the rest of his time weeping. The prophet David saith, "I have mingled my drink with weeping." St. Austin prayeth God often to give him the grace of tears.⁷

"The unwise make a sport of sin," saith

³ Ezek. ix. 6.

⁴ Isa. lxvi. 2.

⁵ Jer. ix. 1.

⁶ Phil. iii. 18.

⁷ Aug. in Med.

Solomon. Their heart is as a barren land, where all remembrance of their sins is forgotten, but the wise man is sometimes conversant in the house of mourning.¹ Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the sea², as sin and the works of sin are in tears of repentance. Those who were diseased found cure in the troubled pool.³ We lost our felicity by delightful eating, and we recover ourselves by mournful chastening. Christ once weepeth for us, as he wept for Jerusalem, when he offered up strong groanings and cries in the days of his flesh.

“There is,” saith the wise man, “a time to rejoice, and a time to mourn⁴:” we can take the time of rejoicing, but we cannot hit upon the time of mourning. “O that we did know, at the least in this our day, those things that do belong unto our peace!” When we are moved to mournful passions, let us remember with how small pomp and pleasure Christ passed the world, who passed it in often weeping. The two kine carrying the ark⁵, lowed all the way as they went, and yet never stayed until they came unto the place appointed: we go on weeping in this vale of tears, but yet keep on the way still, until we come unto our journey’s end;

¹ Prov. xiv. 9.

² John v. 2.

³ 1 Sam. vi. 12.

⁴ Exod. xiv. 6.

⁵ Eccles. iii. 1. 3, 4.

and then an end of weeping. Here, as in Ramah, a voice is heard of weeping and mourning. The prophet Ezekiel, when he came to see the glory of the Lord in the sanctuary⁶, was brought about by the north: we pass along by many sorrows, and then come to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Of mournful events, Jeremiah said, "This is my sorrow, and I will bear it;" causes of weeping and wailing are sometimes offered. Eli said, "It is the Lord, let him do as it seemeth good unto him;" "He that now goeth forth weeping shall surely return," saith the prophet David, "and bring his sheaf with him."



CHAPTER XXVII.

Of Christ's passion and his suffering upon the altar of the cross, for the sins of the world, and salvation of our souls, how and with what devotion all Christians should meditate thereof.

ALTHOUGH in meditating of the holy virtues of Christ our Saviour, which do require our devotional consideration, we are much moved

⁶ Ezek. xliv. 4.

(I doubt it not), yet when we begin to call to mind his passion¹, then are we as it were carried away in contemplation even from ourselves; and here it is said to devout souls, as it was to the disciples in the garden: "Sit ye here." Let us not say unto Christ, with the Jews, Come down from the cross; but let us fasten ourselves to his cross. Let us go with the blessed Virgin to mount Calvary, and stand by awhile beholding in mournful manner what is done; and when we have beheld until they have done crucifying the Son of God, then with Joseph and Nicodemus let us take down and anoint his crucified body with the sweetest perfumes of praise our hearts can yield, putting it in the new sepulchre of our holiest meditations: and of those who thus do, it may be said, as David said to those who brought him word they had honourably buried their master Saul, "Blessed are you of the Lord; the Lord recompense you this mercy²:" and the Lord too recompense them this devotion that thus do, and blessed be they of the Lord, &c. who thus reverence the Lord of lords.

2. And now to enter into consideration hereof, "Christ loved us," saith the Apostle, "and gave himself a sweet-smelling sacrifice and oblation unto God³:" wherein we may

¹ Matt. xxvi. 36.

² 2 Sam. ii. 5.

³ Eph. v. 2.


consider these three things ; First, the moving cause, to wit, love, "Christ loved us." Secondly, the offering which this love caused him to offer, "He gave himself." Thirdly, the end why he gave himself, "That he might be a reconciliation for man with God the Father." For the first, to wit, love, the moving cause of all ; what greater love is there than for one to give his life for his friend ? yet greater was the love of the Son of God, who gave his life for us that were his enemies. "Doubtless," saith the Apostle, "one will scarce die for a righteous man," and yet one is found to die for them that were unrighteous ; and then too, when it was in his power to die or not to die.

"The greatest perfection and force of love," say the philosophers, "is the force unitive," and this was never in any so forcible as in Christ, when he would unite unto himself his Church or congregation⁴ ; which accordeth with this of the Holy Ghost, "Let a man so love his wife as Christ loved the congregation." The wife is chargeable, but far more chargeable was the congregation to him.

· 3. For the offering itself, it was himself Aaron and all his sons never made such an offering as this was : he gave himself a sacri-

⁴ Eph. v. 25.

fice. Why, was there nothing in heaven or earth that could have been offered else? Was there no other sacrifice to be had but innocent Isaac? Must none be offered to make a reconciliation for man but the Son of man? And was sin then so heinous that nothing could cleanse the contagion thereof but the death of an innocent lamb? Stand and hear a little, O sinful man, thy Saviour himself speaketh unto thee: "For thy sake do I suffer all this, for thy sake do I offer myself, as thou seest, a sacrifice upon the cross; all this do I do for the love of thee: thy sins are the thorns that pierced my head, the spear that opened my side; thy delicacies was the vinegar and gall that I drank; thy liberty and looseness was the nails that fastened me to the cross. See whither thy sin, thy vanities, O man, hath brought me! Behold me suffering for thee, to reconcile thee unto my Father!" Doth he not by this, O Christian man, inflame thee with his love, strengthen thee with his merit, and comfort thy sorrowful heart with his abundant mercy? If he were punished for us, then were we punishable of ourselves. When now punishment had taken place, and began to wax fiercer and fiercer amongst the rest of the people, Aaron makes speed, takes the censer in his hand, puts on fire, and goes quickly unto the congregation



to make an atonement for them.¹ This atonement hath our Aaron made for us all, when he offered no other offering than himself.

4. What hath man more to offer or to give than his goods, his honour, and his life ; all this hath Christ offered and given us : his goods, when he left his kingdom in heaven ; his honour, when he was reproached of men ; his life, when he yielded up the same for all upon the altar of the cross. But how many indignities did he suffer before he came to the accomplishment hereof, when as like a meek lamb he was carried and recarried from judgment to judgment, when he was mocked and scorned of all sorts ! In his suffering itself we may consider amongst whom and when he suffered ; amongst even his own people : Pilate said, “Thine own nation hath delivered thee unto me² :” where did he suffer, but at Jerusalem, the king’s city ? and there without the gate of the same city, in a place called Calvary, where thieves and murderers were wont to suffer ; when was all this done, but in the chiefest solemnity of the Jews ? at which time no small concourse of people from all places were assembled, and might behold what was done. According to that, “O all you that pass by, behold, and see

¹ Numb. xvi. 47.

² John xviii. 35.

if there were ever sorrow like my sorrow?" From the hour wherein he was sought for and taken by torch-light and lanthorns, until the sixth hour of his crucifying, that he gave up the ghost: one betrayeth him, another apprehends him; one binds him, another leads him bound from Pilate to Herod, from Herod to Pilate again: one seeketh false witness against him; another crieth out upon him, He is not worthy to live: one scourgeth him, another strikes him on the face: one clotheth him with purple, another putteth on his head a crown of thorns; a third gives him a reed, mocking him; so they never let him rest until they have no more what to do against him.

5. When we have seen his suffering, let us consider how great he was that suffered, even he it was to whom power over all things in heaven and earth was given¹: he, before whom the twenty-four elders fall down: he, whose countenance John a little after beheld to shine as the sun in his strength; when he saw him, and fell at his feet as dead, hearing a voice proceed from him, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and I am alive but was dead, and am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death."² And thus who it was that suffered.

¹ Matt. xxviii. 18.

² Rev. i. 18.

6. Now for whom suffered he all this? Even for none other than sinful men: for Christ suffered in the place of sinners and with sinners, to show that he suffered for sinners. O Christian man, learn to hate sin which was so heinous: and as often as thou art at leisure to meditate of the passion of Christ (which thou shouldest daily do, for it is better, saith one, than thy fasting with bread and water), so often, I say, as thou dost meditate of his passion, call to mind as the greatness of thy sins, so also the greatness of his love who died for thy sins, that as in the one thou mayest bewail thy own wickedness, so in the other thou mayest acknowledge his bounty and mercy towards thee in redeeming thee from the same.

7. And of whom suffered he all this injury? even of his own kindred and acquaintance, the people of the Jews. After all his miracles and works of mercy done amongst them, in curing their sick, cleansing their lepers, and healing all that came unto him; after his feeding so many hungry people in the wilderness, teaching so many the way to salvation that came to hear him, now they reward his pains and travails with opprobrious contumelies, his unspeakable mercy with bitter hatred, never leaving him until they bring him unto the death of the cross. Thus he suffered, not of strangers and foreigners, but

of his own neighbours, yea, his own brethren: as himself calleth them, "It is not good to take the children's bread, and to give it unto dogs¹;" By the one he understandeth the one God's, and by the other the Gentiles; by the Jews, children, in the first place; by the other, aliens.

8. Four things there are which we should meditate upon concerning the passion of our Saviour Christ. First, for imitation; calling to mind his patient suffering, we should not abhor suffering, or murmur against tribulations, seeing Christ our Saviour suffered so great things as he did. Secondly, for compassion; we ought to consider with grief of mind that our sins were the cause of all this, and therefore we should truly repent us of them. Thirdly, for admiration, when we call to mind, who, for whom, and what he suffered. Fourthly, for resolution, that is, to resolve ourselves to give our bodies, as the apostle speaketh, "A sacrifice to serve him, who hath given himself a sacrifice to save us²;" and so have we by his passion, imitation to direct, compassion to unite, admiration to stir up, resolution to perfect, our Christian love and duty towards him.

9. To go forward, and leave all the indignities offered him in the judgment-hall, his

¹ Matt. xv. 26.

² Rom. xii. 1.

scourging, crowning with thorns, buffeting, spitting upon, bearing his cross, and the like : now the greedy soldiers begin to spoil him of his garments, exposing his sacred body all naked unto the sharp and cold air, which cruelty was not wont to be offered but to abject persons. Then begin they to fasten him to the cross, racking and straining his hands and feet farther than naturally they would extend ; so cruelly are all parts of his body so stretched, that the beholders might tell all his bones, according to that, " They told all my bones."³ Here is he fastened unto the cross with nails, at the hands and feet, " They digged my hands and feet." Inexplicable was this suffering, the nails piercing those places were the sinews met together, the poise of his body every moment increasing the pain. Now they offer him vinegar mingled with gall, according to that, " They gave me gall to eat, and vinegar to drink." Oh, how mildly did he suffer all this ! How should we be content to leave earthly things, seeing him stripped and spoiled of his clothing ! how should we crucify the flesh and the concupiscence thereof, when we remember his spare flesh to be fastened to the cross ! See we here Abel killed of his brother ; the serpent lifted up to heal all that are stung. " O most loving Saviour (saith

³ Ps. xxii. 16, 17.

St. Austin), that which the sinner deserveth, the innocent suffereth.”¹

10. A superscription is written by Pilate, upon the cross, “Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews.”² Pilate, although ignorant, commended Christ in this superscription in three things : first, for the remission of sins, in that he wrote Jesus ; secondly, for the bestowing of grace, in that he said, of Nazareth ; thirdly, for his power, in that he called him king of the Jews ; and this is written in three tongues, for that of all sorts coming unto the feast, every tongue might confess Jesus the Son of God.

It is written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. In Hebrew, for the Jews, who gloried in the law ; in Greek, for the Grecians, who gloried in wisdom ; and in Latin, for the Romans, who most gloried in dominion and power : as if Pilate should have said : “ This is the king of all religion, having reference to the Hebrews ; of all wisdom, having reference to the Greeks ; of all power, respecting herein the Romans.” And these three sorts (saith St. Austin) may challenge unto them the dignity of the cross, to wit, all devout and religious, rich or poor, all signified by the Hebrews ; all wise, who are noted by the Greeks : all mighty, who are resembled by the Latins : so then

¹ Aug. Medit. vii.

² Matt. xxvii. 37.

the religion, the wisdom, the power of the world, confess Christ their king. "King of the Jews," that is to say, of them that confess him, for so it signifieth of Judah; and the superscription is written in their hearts: he wrote king of the Jews, not for that he was only king of them, but he was king of the Gentiles also, even of all that do confess him.

11. And this superscription is written in his death, to show that for all his suffering death, he lost not his kingdom: the Jews saw it to their shame, and therefore would have this title altered, which Pilate refused, saying: "That which I have written, I have written, it is true, I will not alter it³;" and Pilate in the end found it true indeed, to the terror of his wretched conscience, who after he had heard of the soldiers the verity of the resurrection, lived in continual anguish, until at last, after disgrace received of the Romans, he came to a desperate end, by casting himself away, as histories mention.

12. While this was doing, to return unto the manner of our Saviour's passion, at this time did they not also spare to reproach him, and this was done by many: first, of them that sat by him and watched him; secondly, by some of the high priests that came to mock him; thirdly, of those that passed by, and

³ John xix. 22.

wagged their heads at him; fourthly, of the thieves that were crucified with him. One of the evangelists saith, "They both reviled him:" St. Luke mentioneth one only. "It seemeth," saith St. Austin, "that both of them began to revile him, of which St. Matthew speaketh, But one perceiving the heavens troubled, and other signs, moved with remorse, desisted¹, and then only one of them, according to St. Luke, reviled him."²

13. Now they begin to repeat the words of the false witnesses: "Thou couldest build the temple if it were destroyed³, If thou be the Son of God, save thyself."⁴ "No," saith Beda, "if thou be the Son of God? nay, because he was the elected of God, he would not come down, for therefore came he into the world."⁵ Believe ye him, rising from the sepulchre, which is more than descending from the cross.

The other malefactor saith unto him, "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." What kingdom was this? Surely no temporal kingdom. "In thy kingdom," that is, a better kingdom than any here beneath, or that Tiberius now enjoyeth.

Great was the faith of this thief, for neither

¹ Matt. xxvii. 44.

² Luke xxiii. 39, 40.

³ Matt. xxvii. 40.

⁴ Mark xv. 29.

⁵ Se salvum facere descendere noluit, quod Christus est Dei electus.

the fear of the Jews now present, nor the sharpness of his own pain, the blasphemy of his fellow, the flight of the disciples, the apparent infirmity of Christ's flesh, made him any way to waver; but first he acknowledgeth Christ to be a Lord; secondly, he prayeth to be remembered of him, and therefore acknowledgeth him to be of power to do him good. This thief could help himself but in two things, his heart and his tongue; which he doth; with his heart he believeth, with his tongue he maketh confession of Christ his Saviour, while his bad fellow now dying insulteth over the Lord of life.

14. And now behold we our Saviour Christ taking his farewell of the world, by yielding up his life for man's redemption. At this very time let us hear him, as a doctor in his chair, in his seven last words uttered upon the cross, which by some are divided into eight: two of these he spake for sinners: "Father, forgive them;" and "Thou shalt be with me in paradise." Two for the godly, "Woman, behold thy Son," and to the same disciple, "Behold thy mother." Two for the world, "I thirst," "It is finished." Two for himself, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

15. The first was spoken in the act of his crucifying; when framing himself to the cross,

he saith, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." "Good to me, but hurt to themselves;" and so is it with them that hurt others, they know not what punishment they bring to themselves, and what crown and garland to them whom they think they most hurt. "They know not what they do:" he prayeth not so much for them who did know, or ought to have known him to be the true Messias, as for the lay and illiterate people, who of a blind zeal did they knew not what. What greater miracle than this loving prayer? Here was a word of all patience and piety, full of love and unspeakable sweetness. They say, "His blood be upon us," and he prays it be not upon them. "Father, forgive them." Even now pierced with nails, crowned with thorns, laden with scoffs and reproaches, and yet here amongst all, a "Father, forgive them." And it was not without a mystery that he said, "Father, forgive them." By all this we learn to bear the greatest injuries of the world, and to pray withal for our very enemies. What should dust and ashes take upon itself to revenge, when the Lord of heaven and earth so meekly endureth all? What did the world ever see more patient, more charitable, than the Son of God? "Father, forgive them," pitying those that persecuted him.

16. The second word was spoken to the penitent thief, "Thou shalt be with me in

paradise," which we understand not to be spoken of that earthly paradise from which Adam was expelled, but of that imperial place where the saints and angels are above in glory. By this saying comfort is given to them that repent them of their sins, and call for mercy upon Christ crucified: Behold, how bountiful Christ is, he gives a thief paradise that doth but ask it of him. Here one worthy of punishment, and worthy to suffer death by his own confession, receiveth mercy at the last instant; but yet no man ought, by this example, of set purpose to defer his conversion unto the last; the privilege of a few, much less of one doth not infer a common law for all. Christ here gives mercy unto a thief, and unto a thief at the last cast, to show there is no place left for desperation. But see the faith of this thief that findeth mercy; a disciple denieth his Master, this thief acknowledgeth him¹; he seeth the Son of God hanging upon the cross, and he prayeth unto him as God, sitting upon the throne of majesty in heaven: he accuseth his own defaults; reproveth the blasphemy of his fellow; he acknowledgeth Christ's innocency, the Jews that know the law crucify him; he seeth him in all contempt, and yet he confesseth him a King, a Lord; to be a lord requireth power, and a

¹ Eus. Emis. de Beat. Latro.

king rule, but here is neither to see to. He beholdeth him suffering death, and yet he makes request unto him as the giver of life: he which had before stolen earthly things, now steals heaven: O admirable conversion! That which we should take example of is an example of comfort, of mercy, of hope, of forgiveness, of confessing our sins, and with steadfast faithfulness of acknowledging the Son of God, and craving mercy to be remembered of him in his kingdom.

17. The third word was, when he said unto his blessed mother, "Woman, behold thy Son;" and to consider these two together, when he said unto the same disciple, "Behold thy mother;" as if he should say unto the blessed Virgin, Hitherto have I obeyed thee, and cared for thee as a Son, from henceforth in my stead I will leave thee a disciple; unto the other, John, Thou hast done me service, now do it where I will thee; behold her to whom thou shalt perform obedience and care, as the son to his mother. "And thus Christ a virgin (saith St. Jerome) commits his virgin mother to a virgin disciple."¹ This third word is a word of pity and care; for to see him now in such dolours and pains, to take care for his mother was a token of much love, whereby he sheweth us to help

¹ Hier. cont. Jov.

our parents and do them good what in the world we can. But what a change doth the blessed Virgin make, who hath for the Lord the servant; for the Master the man; for the Son of God a son of Zebedee! This change could not but grieve her, and pierce (as Simeon had before said) her very heart.² "Woman, behold thy son," not naming her mother; which very name mother might have increased her grief, beholding the passion and departure of so dear a son, and might move her motherly mind to more and more sorrow. The son crucified above, the mother mourning beneath; his wounds wounded her heart; his piercing was her piercing, every stroke of the nails struck through her breast; all this while not a word is mentioned, weeping would not suffer her to speak, who at any occasion spake seldom; the longest speech she used, that we read of was her Magnificat, her speech with God. The nurse sees her youngling dying, the mother her son. In one day she is deprived of a Son, of a Saviour; though not lost, yet left for a time; such a parting, such a son, such a mother, such tears, such love, never was, nor shall be!

On the other side, O loving disciple, beloved of the Lord of love, thou art now left for a time, but never cease to mention love

² Luke ii. 35.

or write of love ! Jonathan and David, Jacob and Benjamin, wept at parting. It followeth—

18. From the sixth hour there was a darkness unto the ninth, the Sun of righteousness suffereth eclipse ; the visible sun, or the most clear light of the world, hideth his beams, as not able to behold the Lord of heaven and earth suffering ; all creatures seem to suffer with him ; the earth trembleth ; the heavens are all in black, as in mourning manner. The graves open, the rocks or stones cleave asunder, the whole frame of nature is disquieted, when now the God of nature suffereth. What a solemn and doleful time was this ! some strike their breasts, others stand wondering. The centurion saith, as it were lifting up his hand to heaven, “ Surely this was the Son of God ! ”

19. The fourth word was about the ninth hour, when he cried, “ Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ” Which for that he spake in the Hebrew, some standing by and hearing this, said, “ He calleth for Elias.” These, according to St. Jerome, were the Roman soldiers, who understood not the Hebrew, or peradventure some of the Jews themselves, who by reason of the noise could not well discern what was spoken. The doubling of the voice sheweth his double nature ; his Deity

spake not this, which was impassible : like as the sun shining upon the wood, the axe cutteth the wood, but the sun remaineth inviolable. His humanity spake this, which suffered and spake at this time as human nature is wont to speak, when it thinks itself forsaken ; not that the Son of God was any way doubtful of divine assistance, but to show how truly he bare upon him man's infirmity (sin only excepted), which thinks itself forsaken in times of grief. Here we are moved to suffer with Christ, beholding insensible creatures themselves to suffer with him. St. Ambrose saith, " He sorrowed for me, who had nothing for himself to sorrow." ¹ Rational affliction cried, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? sensual affliction cried the same ; and yet in Christ, a voice not of diffidence or so much of complaint, as of admiration. Behold, O man, what I suffer for thee ; behold the punishments wherewith I am afflicted ; and when thou beholdest the outward man, think also that the inward man is partaker of sorrow and suffering, wherewith I am pierced, finding the ungratefulness of thee towards me, suffering for thy sins. Here we learn in times of extremity to offer unto God our sorrowful sighs and supplications ; and though we seem

¹ Pro me doluit, qui pro se nihil habuit quod doleret.

to the eye of the world to be forsaken, yet we may take comfort in his mercy, who is near unto all them that call upon him, as the prophet speaketh; yea, then, when they pour out faithfully their complaints before him.

20. The fifth word was, when Jesus knew that all things were now accomplished which were spoken of him, this remained, "They gave me vinegar to drink¹;" he saith, "I thirst," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which was written of him: They gave me vinegar to drink: when it is said that the Scripture might be fulfilled, we do not understand this causatively, but consequently, as the schoolmen speak, for Christ did not this therefore, because the Scripture had spoken it; but therefore the Scripture spake it, because Christ in his time should do it. When he saith, "I thirst," what was this thirst? natural, caused by the emanation of his blood, together with the extremities of his sorrows? Which in part also is true, for his blood exhausted, extremity of thirst followed: But there was withal in Christ a thirst supernatural; and this thirst was the salvation of souls wherewith he laboured, as with a most vehement thirst, or desire. The prophet saith, "My soul is athirst for God." This thirst of Christ was our health, our joy:

¹ Ps. lxi. 21.

“O good Jesus,” saith St. Bernard, “Thy thirst was my salvation.”²

21. And here somewhat is added to his suffering; for when these men had hurt him so much, that they could almost hurt him no longer, they gave him sour wine, upon a bunch of hyssop, a bitter herb, mixed with myrrh and gall, such as they had given him to drink before his lifting up to the cross: here they deny that unto the Son of God, which they were wont to grant to greatest malefactors, giving them at these times wine to drink; but Christ hath no other but vinegar and gall. Behold what a supper they give our Lord (for it was now supper time): here was the banquet, our sins gave him gall to eat, and vinegar to drink. O miserable men that we are, to seek delicacies! here are we taught to drink with Christ the wine of devotion mixed with myrrh, the mortification of the flesh; and gall, the compunction of the spirit. On the other side, we must take heed that we give not Christ, thirsting for our salvation, vinegar mixed with gall, as these men did; that is, an evil and sinful life, which is vinegar mixed with the gall of scandalous conversation.

22. The sixth word was, when he said, “It is finished;” that is, All whatsoever was

² *Sitis tua salus mea.*

spoken of my suffering is now complete, the honour of my Father, the good of the faithful, all that I should do concerning my obedience to his will, who gave me this work to accomplish. "It is finished:" nothing remaineth in this suffering but now my dying, and now I die. This our Saviour spake, as having fought a good fight, and finished his course; this he spake as one having undertaken a journey, and having now gone through many passages, at his journey's end he saith, "It is finished:" first lifting up his eyes to heaven, Father, thy will;—then beholding men upon the earth, Faithful men, your health—then respecting the breaking of the serpent's head, Satan, the vanquishing of thy power—"It is finished." O happy voice of the Son of God!

23. The seventh word was, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." St. Luke saith, that he cried this with a loud voice. Some of the ancient fathers think our Saviour was now meditating upon the one-and-thirtieth Psalm, and coming unto those words in the Psalm, he uttered them with an audible voice: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," and so gave up the ghost. This was now the ninth hour of the day, when as the sun was darkened, and the earth shook with other signs that appeared, as the evangelists show. At this hour Adam sinned: "The same hour of the day wherein Adam sinned,

Christ died ¹:" [saith one.] By dying, Christ opened the gate of paradise, which Adam by sinning shut up against him and his. Adam in the garden lost life; and Christ in the garden restored life, when he yielded himself up with these words, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit," even unto the suffering of death. For these words being uttered, he gave up the ghost; his eyes closed, his countenance pale, his head bended down: heaven nor earth ever saw such a sight; the God of life, the Author of life, and Life itself, becomes dead. In this word we may consider many things, as first, that our departing souls should be commended into the hands of our heavenly Father: secondly, somewhat we have here for the strengthening of our faith, Christ, bending down his head, uttered these words; not of constraint, but voluntarily: who ever lay down to sleep so peaceably as Christ did, when he gave up the ghost? Men when they are dying, they are scarce able to breathe; at this time Christ speaketh with a loud voice, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." We see what Christ's example doth teach us to do in commending our departing souls into his hands; how at the hour of his death, he prayed, he wept, and

¹ "Hora, qua Adam peccavit, Christus expiravit." Dr. Sutton (Ed. 1602) quotes these words, but makes no reference to his authority.—Ed.

spake unto his heavenly Father as we have heard, and commended his soul into his hands.

24. And there may the Christian enter into a large field, in entering into a meditation of all these together. We were more insensible than the senseless creatures, if we are not moved with the passion of our Lord, whose death was our merit. Consider we how great things the Son of God hath done for us, and suffered for our redemption: consider we how great things they were which he suffered; how great his sorrows were, which showed the greatness of his love; how great his injuries were, when he was falsely accused, mocked, spit at, buffeted, whipped, crowned with thorns, bereft of his clothes, burdened with his cross, pierced with nails, lanced with a spear, and so died. "They shall see him whom they have pierced." When Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt¹; they were so astonished, they had not a word to say: when Christ shall say, "I am your brother, I am he whom you crucified," how shall they be confounded that crucified him? But what joy shall they have who believe on him? Up, O Christian soul, and with the dove make thy nest in the holes of this rock. Behold the wounds of thy Saviour: come to this ark,

¹ Gen. xlv. 3.



whither all creatures repair to save themselves. Stand and behold a little, with the devout women, the body of thy Saviour upon the cross: see him afflicted from top to toe: see him wounded in the head, to heal our vain imaginations: see him wounded in the hands, to heal our evil actions: see him wounded in the heart, to cure our vain thoughts: see his eyes shut up, which did enlighten the world; see them shut, that thy eyes might be turned away from beholding vanity: see those ears, which were wont to hear the joyful hymn of the cherubims, "Holy, holy, holy²," now to have heard a multitude of reproaches: see that countenance, which was goodly to look upon, spitted and buffeted. The blood of Abel cried, Justice, justice; but the blood of Christ cried, Mercy, mercy: Oh that we had hearts to meditate of the passion of our Lord! There is nothing of which we ought more to think, more to speak, more to read, or more to meditate of, than of this; because the remembrance hereof appertaineth to the salvation of our souls, increaseth faith, driveth away despair, giveth fortitude against the afflictions of the world, strengtheneth us against temptations, filleth the mind with joy, causeth a loathing of sin, and after a wonderful manner stirreth us up to all devotion. This our Sa-

² Isai. vi. 3.

viour Christ himself well thought upon, when he left so high a Sacrament, so full of heavenly mysteries, for the continual renewing in our hearts of this his most blessed passion. O sweet Jesus, should ever unthankfulness of this love of thine creep upon us? Should not thy precious blood soften our adamant hearts, who hast delivered us from infinite miseries, purchased by thy death? O infinite goodness, and freely offered! thyself hast offered thyself unto thy Father, a sacrifice for our sins; there is no burden heavier than sin; this thou hast eased us of: O blessed Son of God, while I live, saith the prophet, will I call upon the Lord, yea, as long as I have any being. We will offer unto God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and praise his name for ever and ever, who ought to be praised. What shall separate us from the love of Christ?

And thus we meditate of the passion of our Lord, who suffered death, to overcome death: of which St. Austin¹ mentioneth a double cause; the one, that Christ died for us to deliver us; the other, that those whom he had redeemed by his death, he might teach by his grace, and by his example instruct: For why did the head, saith the same father, suffer, but to give the body an example? Christ humbled himself unto death, even

¹ Aug. Serm. de Nat. 3. et in Psalm. xxxiv.

unto the death of the cross : we ought also to humble ourselves to be crucified unto the world, and the world to us : unto him were our sins imputed, unto us his righteousness : he gave himself a sacrifice to save us, and we give ourselves a sacrifice to serve him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and how the verity hereof doth much strengthen our Christian faith.

“ LOVE,” saith Solomon, “ is as strong as death ² ;” we shall now see in the resurrection of our Lord, this verified, whom we have considered dying for our sins : for here we find that love that was stronger than death. Now behold we him as a champion returning from the spoils of joy, after so many labours and travels ; now meet we with him too, in joyful manner. “ Our David has slain his ten thousand ³ ;” our eagle is renewed ; our phoenix is revived ; our Jonas is come safe and sound from the belly of the whale : our sun that went down in a ruddy cloud, is risen again with

² Solomon's Song, viii. 6.

³ 1 Sam. xviii. 7.

glorious beams of light: our grain of corn that was cast into the earth, is sprung up and flourisheth: our Joseph is delivered out of prison: our Samson hath carried away the gates of his enemies¹: our spouse is come; the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: Christ our Redeemer is risen from the dead. He is risen early, that was late in the evening laid in the sepulchre, after his doleful passion: he is risen, he is risen; wherefore with the prophet we say, "Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."²

Christ hasteneth his resurrection, that his disciples might not too long dwell in sorrow; he would that their mournful hearts should soon receive comfort. Christ rose early the third day; to have lain longer might have bred doubt of his rising; to have rose sooner, of his dying. Had only the sorrowful apostles, or those women that came mourning unto the sepulchre, the joy of the resurrection? No, this was the joy of thousand thousands, which may say with David, "This is the day of the Lord, we will rejoice and be glad in it."³ Look we unto the passion before mentioned, there we see weeping and wailing, sorrow and suffering, on every side; the blessed Virgin, the disciples full of heaviness: now all is

¹ Judg. xvi. 3.

² Ps. xxx. 5.

³ Ps. cxviii. 24.

turned to joy. The angel appeareth in white; the women run and tell the disciples⁴; they scarce believe either the angels, or one another, for joy. A little before, the stone is refused of the builders⁵, Deliver us Barabbas: now is this stone the head of the corner, which joins together the building of two nations, both Jews and Gentiles.⁶ A little before, We have no other king but Cesar; now is he a king above all Cesars: a little before, He trusted in God, let him deliver him, if he will have him; now is he delivered, and God is with him, and he with God: a little before, is he a lamb led unto the slaughter⁷, but now a lion of the tribe of Judah: a little before, he was in humility, and judged of others; now is he risen, to appear the Judge both of quick and dead, at the right hand of God above in glory.⁸

2. Wherefore, O faithful Christian man, rejoice in the Lord; yea, saith the apostle, again I say, Rejoice, rejoice in the resurrection of thy Saviour⁹; for many are the benefits that hence arise. Now is thy Lord returned from the battle, nay from the conquest, over the devil, sin, hell, and death; "thanks be unto God, that hath given us the victory by

⁴ John xx. 2, 3.

⁶ Isai. viii. 14.

⁸ Rev. v. 5.

⁵ Ps. cxviii. 22.

⁷ Acts viii. 32.

⁹ Phil. iv. 4.

Jesus Christ our Lord.”¹ Believe that his resurrection was the cause of thy resurrection; for he which raised Christ from the dead, shall also raise these our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. If thou consider this, thou shalt have consolation against all fear and dread of death, for thou mayest say, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” Again, “I will lay me down to sleep, and take my rest, for the Lord maketh me to dwell in safety.” Because this was so behoveful a point for the stay of our Christian faith, Christ appeared so often unto his apostles after his resurrection, communed with them, as at other times, so then especially when their hearts did burn within them as he opened the Scriptures, showing them the verity of his resurrection.² The apostles whose charge was to teach glad tidings unto the world³, the first tidings they taught was the doctrine of the resurrection.⁴

The evangelists do most diligently set forward unto us the resurrection of Christ, as a thing profitable and joyful to all faithful believers; for in the resurrection, we see how Christ is exalted, and what hope we have in him. This they lay down with many circumstances, both by testimonies before and

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 57.

² Luke xxiv. 32.

³ Acts ii. 24. 32.

⁴ Acts iii. 26. iv. 33.

after; before, that he had told his disciples he must die, and rise again⁵; after, in that he was conversant amongst them forty days, walked in the way with two of them, communing of the things that were done at Jerusalem, (and surely in time of sorrow, to commune of Christ, and talk of him in our wearisome journey of this life, shall much comfort us,) at this time, Christ walketh with them, their understanding is opened.

3. The women come unto the sepulchre, and view every place thoroughly; they find the stone rolled away, the linen clothes remaining; a sign his body was not taken away, but risen, for these were together laid with his body in the sepulchre: the body gone; the angels testify he is risen. What say the soldiers to this? First, they confess a truth; afterward, corrupted with money, they give out his disciples had stolen away his body while they were asleep.⁶ If they were asleep, how saw they the disciples steal away the body? If they were not asleep, how could a few weak fishers take away the body from a band, or company of armed soldiers? But let them confess the truth, as they did before unto the high priests, and after, when they were charged, that they had seen a vision of angels, and that he was risen indeed. So

⁵ Matt. xvi. 21.

⁶ Matt. xxviii. 13.

the verity is invincible, and the joy great of the resurrection. We see a desire and love to Christ in Peter and John; for why, they run to the sepulchre¹; (affection makes us diligent;) the women come with sweet odours to anoint the body: we have no sweet odours, but many unsavoury sins to bring unto the resurrection; and there to offer up the incense of our praise, which is the sweetest offering our hearts can yield.

4. Mary cometh near her Lord; Christ saith unto her, "Woman, touch me not²:" not but that Christ had a body tangible after his resurrection, but, Mary, touch me not; Do not so much affect my presence here on earth, as my presence in heaven. By this we learn to know and honour Christ, as he is risen, and sitteth at the right hand of God above. St. Paul, writing to Timothy, saith, "Remember that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead."³ When the teacher gives his scholar many lessons, if he give him one amongst the rest with a memento, Remember this, he thinks that of all other of most especial regard, and worthy of the best observation; and it seemeth the Apostle so accounted of the resurrection: for what is there more necessary for our Christian meditation, than here to call to mind

¹ John xx. 4.

² John xx. 17.

³ 2 Tim. ii. 8.

that it was he who did redeem Israel? that as he rose powerfully in himself, so also did he in those that believe on him; that he rose according unto the scriptures⁴, that he rose by way of equity; for first he humbled himself, and then God exalted him, giving him a name above all names⁵: that he rose by way of power; for being without sin, death could not hold him; for it was impossible he should be holden of death.⁶

5. He whom John not long before had seen as a sacrifice offered upon the cross, when he was, as the prophet speaketh, without form to look upon⁷, now he seeth him after another manner than amongst thieves; now walking amongst the seven candlesticks⁸: then clothed in purple, by way of derision; now clothed as the sun: then called a king by those that reproached him; now called the King of kings by them that honour him: wherefore as we have seen him in his humility, so with John also let us see him in his glory. As we have seen him fighting for us in his passion, so let us also behold him triumphing for us in his resurrection; for all was for us. In the passion and resurrection of Christ our Saviour, consisteth the sum of all our happiness; he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification⁹: unless he had died, we had

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 4.

⁶ Acts ii. 24.

⁸ Rev. i. 13, 14.

⁵ Phil. ii. 10.

⁷ Isa. liii. 2.

⁹ Rom. iv. 25.

not been delivered from sin, and consequently from death; unless he had rose from the dead, we had not received comfort of rising again from the dead: his passion removed away that which was evil, his resurrection brought unto us that which was good. As in these two we have a double benefit, so have we a double example: in his passion, an example of suffering; in his resurrection, of hope, when we have suffered. Which doth show in us two lives; the one in the flesh laborious, which we must endure; the other when we are delivered from the flesh, which we must hope.

6. Now we must not only acknowledge with the mouth, or believe in the heart, this sacred truth of the resurrection, but we must also be raised up to newness of life; for thus much doth the Holy Ghost require of us in believing the resurrection. "We are (saith the apostle) buried with him by baptism unto his death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life¹;" and this is the similitude which we do carry of his resurrection. This is to "set our affection on heavenly things, or things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God²;" and this is the third thing that we should apply ourselves unto, in believing the resurrection from the dead; that is, first to

¹ Rom. vi. 4.

² Coloss. iii. 1.

rise with him from the death of sin, and consequently to be raised by him unto the resurrection of the just.

7. It is wonderful to consider with how many strange enemies Christ had to do at once ; with the world, and the prince of the world, with death, and sin the cause of death.


Who would have thought that one sheep should have been able to have withstood so many wolves? but hear the triumphant voice of the conqueror, "Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law."³ The apostle, like a valiant champion, goes forth and offers challenge and combat to all these, or any of them : "Whoso shall lay any thing to the charge of God's chosen?"⁴ If Satan say, That will I, because they have followed the way of ungodliness : if the world say, I will lay to their charge the many vanities they received of me ; if the law say, I will indite them because of transgression ; if death say, I will arrest them by reason of sin ; St. Paul answereth them all with a short reply, "Jesus Christ is dead, yea, he is risen from the dead ;" as if he would say, that same rising of Christ from the dead, hath bereft you all of your force, and now, all your pleas are frus-

³ 1 Cor. xv. 55.

⁴ Rom. viii. 34.

trate. Nay, how is the poor captive comforted, when the judge himself shall say, "Who shall detain this man? I have paid his ransom."

8. What a joyous thing is it now to be strengthened in the faith of the resurrection? First, in regard of the calamities of this life; for what shall dismay us, seeing the members hope to be joined with their head? Secondly, though this life be transitory and troublesome, yet Daniel shall be delivered out of the lions' den. The dove shall return to the ark with a branch of olive, when once the flood and waters are fallen. Jeremy shall come out of the pit whereinto he is cast of his enemies. Our noble David, having gotten the victory, is gone triumphantly to reign in Jerusalem; we, all his people and army, trotting and training after him, shall also triumph with him in all his royalty. We were detained and held as captives of cruel enemies; but by Christ the enemies are vanquished, and we are delivered. How are we delivered? by the Son of God. Was it not his suffering only that was (as hath been said) the removing of evil? Himself saith, "What profit is there in my blood, if I go down to corruption?" as if he would tell us, there were something adjoined hereunto, to make his suffering glorious and beneficial unto others; and this was, his resurrection.



9. Every effect doth naturally show its cause. The resurrection was the effect of his Deity, and therefore gave evident testimony he was God. Again, his resurrection confirmeth our faith, for so doth St. Paul¹ reason against the Pseudo-Apostoli. "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ risen." If Christ be not risen, then where is our believing? But Christ is risen, therefore there is a resurrection. The head doth not rise without the body. The head is risen, the body therefore shall rise. So the resurrection of Christ is the cause of our resurrection, and he rising we all rise.

The Lord is King (saith the prophet), let the earth rejoyce, and the isles be glad thereof. The first fruits being sanctified, all the other fruits are hallowed unto the Lord. "Thomas, bring hither thy hand, and feel the print of the nails."² Blessed are those that have not seen, and yet do believe." That which befel Christ's body (saith St. Austin) the third day, shall befall our bodies in the last day.

10. Four sorts were there, which beheld and heard the whole manner of our Saviour's passion and resurrection. The first were a kind of men, which only were present as spectators, hearing and seeing what was done without further observation; and these were

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 13, 14.

² John xx. 27.

many of the common people, which, following their own affairs, little respected that which was then a doing. The second were the soldiers, who when they had watched the sepulchre, seen the angel of the Lord, and the earthquake, as men amazed went forth into the city, showing what had happened; yet by-and-by corrupted with money, did not stick to tell the contrary. The third were the High Priests and Pharisees; these altogether endeavouring to suppress the rumour of the resurrection, could in no case abide that any should so much as mention it. The fourth were the disciples of Christ, and those believed on him; to these did he appear, to these brought he great joy when they beheld him, and communed with him after he was risen.

11. After the same manner are there in the world four sorts that are diversely affected towards this article of the resurrection. Some, as those of the common sort, receive neither joy nor sorrow, as if it did not appertain unto them to have care or respect to this principal point of their Christian belief. These have the name of Christians, but little consider whatever Christ did for them. Some there are of the second sort, which do believe that Christ is risen, they think of it, and speak of it, but they persevere not herein; for going away, they are corrupted with the world;

they speak the contrary ; by their works they deny, that there is any resurrection at all. These, like the soldiers that kept the sepulchre, follow the favour of the world, and are led from truth to falsehood. O unhappy men, that for vile things of the world, leave the joyful tidings they have heard and seen of the resurrection !

Some there are, who, with the High Priests and Pharisees, cannot endure the fame of Christ, or those which would set forth the honour of his resurrection. And of these what shall we say ? When they hear the happy tidings of the resurrection, they labour to draw the minds of men from the devotion thereof : these are the worst of all other. But some there are which, with the disciples, rejoice and never rest until they come unto the sepulchre (for love resteth not), and these see it so as it is told them ; and Christ by faith appeareth unto them ; they go not with Mary from thence, but are there weeping until his grace speak comfortably unto them ; when they rejoice and say, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared unto us." And these are those who have part in the first resurrection, for on such the second death hath no power. The first resurrection is to receive Jesus Christ in true faith, and to rise from sin by newness of life, and these also shall one day have part in the last resurrec-

tion, when they shall sit with Christ that is risen before; when they shall live with him, and reign with him in the kingdom of heaven. In the mean time, Christ still inviteth them (saith St. Austin) to this life¹, where there is no defect, no death, saying, You seek a happy life, it is not in this region to be found. If one seek a mine of gold in some place, where no such thing is to be had, he which well knoweth it to be so, doth he not say, Why doth this man dig and delve in vain? His labour is but lost; he maketh a ditch, whereinto he may descend; as for treasure, here it is not: In like manner, while we seek our felicity here, well we may dig and delve, and endanger ourselves, but here lieth no treasure; wherefore we must set our affections on heavenly things.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of Christ's ascension up into heaven, besides many good instructions; how hereby our hope of ascending is confirmed.

BECAUSE the ascension of our Lord and Saviour was, after all his travail, the last farewell he took of the world, his doings and

¹ Aug. Ser. de Temp. 114.

sayings at this time would have at least our Christian attention. St. Mark² telleth us that at this time he was giving his Apostles their commission, to preach the Gospel or glad tidings to every creature; as also the power that they should have to confirm this teaching by; so after he had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven. St. Luke tells us, that he gathered them together, commanding them not to depart from Jerusalem, but there to wait for the promise of the Father, which he said you have heard of me. When he had spoken these things, while he was even now (as the same Evangelist saith in another place) blessing them, he departed from them, and was carried up into heaven, for a cloud took him out of their sight, and they returned to Jerusalem from mount Olivet³, and when they were come into an upper chamber⁴, they all continued in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus.⁵ St. Matthew speaking hereof saith, "All power is given unto him⁶;" St. John saith no more, but mentioneth his words, "I ascend to my Father and your Father."

2. Here we see a loving Master taking his

² Mark xvi. 15.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 51.

⁶ John xx. 17.

³ Acts i. 9.

⁵ Matt. xxviii. 18.

leave of his loving family ; here is blessing and praying on both sides ; here is comforting, and looking up to heaven : though distance of place did separate them for a time, yet love should continue them as one for ever. The men of Ephesus wept abundantly when St. Paul departed from them, being chiefly sorry for the words that he spake, that they should see his face no more.¹ But two men in white apparel, or angels in men's form, tell the Apostles, as they stand gazing up into heaven, " This Jesus shall so come, even as you have seen him go to heaven."² And therefore they should see his loving countenance again. When Elijah was taken up in the fiery chariot, Elisha cried, " My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof³ ;" because Elijah's prayers stood Israel in as good stead, as all the horses and chariots did against the force of their enemies ; but the text saith, he cried, " My father, my father, and he saw him no more." The Apostles of our Lord, though silent for admiration, we may easily conceive their hearts cried, Our Saviour, our Saviour. At the very instant, two ambassadors from the court of heaven to prevent doleful passions, tell that they shall so see him come

¹ Acts xx. 28.² Acts i. 10.³ 2 Kings ii. 12.

as they saw him ascend : Himself had before armed them in this respect, "I ascend to my Father and to your Father."

3. He that ever taught his disciples divine instructions, ceased not at the last, even unto the very instant of his departure from them, to do the same ; his showing them what they should do at this departure from them, where they should abide, in what manner, in what place, his blessing them, his gathering them together with one accord ; all which might leave such an impression of him in their minds, when he was gone from them, as he might seem by his precepts and lively example to be still conversant amongst them. And where doth Christ leave his disciples, but upon mount Olivet, where he had often prayed with them, and they with him ? from thence Christ ascended. When we have done our devotions in this world, and done with the world ; when we have blessed our brethren by holy actions, assembled [them] in one accord in prayer, given them good examples, by good instructions taught them what to do,—from mount Olivet [let] our last devotions and prayers [ascend] unto God ; or (if prayers cannot be mentioned in words,) the lifting up of our hands may suffice ; or if that fail, *SURSUM CORDA* ! let our hearts be on high. Our devotion and prayer is the mountain from which we ascend, and for God's sake

(saith St. Bernard ¹) let it not seem wearisome to abide long on this mountain ; but let us raise up our minds, and our hearts, and our hands unto heaven, and let us ascend with our Lord ascending. Let us follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth : let us follow him suffering, by mortifying the flesh ; let us follow him rising, by newness of life ; but most joyfully of all, let us follow him ascending, by setting our affections on heavenly things, or things above.²

4. Now, how this article of our Christian belief, "He ascended up into heaven," whither he hath carried our nature before, doth appertain unto the stay of our Christian faith is best perceived of faithful believers. The death of Christ (saith St. Austin ³) is our vivification, his resurrection is our hope, but his ascension is our glorification ; when as now the angels themselves might seem to have sung Christ with a psalm to heaven, "Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength ;" and his Apostles, seeing him ascended, were returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and there continually in the Temple lauding and praising God ⁴, because now sure faith had shaken scandalous and doubtful sorrow, seeing the Lord after all his

¹ Bernard in Ascen. Dom.

² Col. iii. 1.

³ August. in Ascen. Dom.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 53.

suffering ascended up into glory, and remembering his words, "I go to prepare a place for you."

How many testimonies are these! Every one telleth us what is the end of our Christian believing. For as all other things in Christ were for us, he was born for us, he was given to us, so for us also was his ascension, saith St. Bernard. For where the body is, thither shall the eagles also be gathered together; we are by nature a noble kind of creature, and of a lofty spirit, naturally desirous to get higher and higher, and therefore we show by whose stock and lineage we are when we covet to ascend whither he is ascended, who is gone before us.

And no small comfort is it, to have this assured, that howsoever we are kept down for a time; yet we shall one day ascend to the full accomplishment of our good desires.

5. In the mean time, what should we but follow him in whom we ascend in the sweet-smelling savour of his perfumes; knowing that pride cannot ascend whither humility is gone; that hatred cannot come whither love is ascended; that vice cannot approach where virtue is exalted; that impiety may not appear where holiness itself is seated; and therefore to follow him in humility, in love, in virtue, in holiness, are, as it were, the steps of ascending to come unto the place

whither he is gone before. It was once said unto man, Earth¹ thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return; but now it is said, Earth thou art, and yet into heaven thou shalt go; whither since thou art going, leave in any case those allurements which would not only stay thy course, but cast thee downward.

6. And here it is not amiss to call to mind some several virtues of our Saviour, precedent unto his ascension; as first, if ever that of Samuel spoken unto Saul, "Obedience is better than sacrifice," was verified, then most truly in this ascension of the Son of God. He was obedient unto his Father's will; we see after all his obedience how he is exalted to heaven, as if obedience were the way thither; "I have accomplished the work which thou hast given me."² Secondly, we may consider his humility according to that, "He which ascended, first descended³," to show that humility also in going down to a lowly conceit of ourselves, is the second step in this course of following him who is ascended up into heaven.

Thirdly, we may consider his patient suffering, according to that, "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him."

Fourthly, we may call to mind how familiarly this loving Shepherd was conversant

• ¹ Gen. iii. 19.

² John xvii. 4.

³ Ephes. iv. 10.

with his little flock, until the very time that he left them; to show, that to pass our time, and to end our time, in charitable and loving manner amongst men, is the way whereby we follow the Son of God, ascending up into heaven. If we will (saith St. Austin) ascend with Christ, we must leave our faults, for with our Physician our faults ascend not; "Who ascendeth (saith David) unto the hill of the Lord, but he that hath innocent hands and a pure heart?"⁴

7. "We would be happy; I know it (saith St. Austin): but why seek we not the way to happiness?"⁵ Many there are that would ascend, but yet will never endeavour themselves to walk the way of ascending: these, with the sons of Zebedee⁶, would sit on the right and left hand in Christ's kingdom, but they will not take any taste at all of Christ's bitter cup. Others there are which, fearing they cannot ascend, have their whole hearts buried in the earth, where they are content to abide. A third sort there are, which so load themselves with the cares of this world, and are so heavy, that they never lift up their minds to heaven; but even as the serpent whose breast is upon the earth, there they abide, and go no farther: and sure a lament-

⁴ Ps. xxiv. 4.

⁵ Aug. de Temp. 141. •

⁶ Matt. xx. 21.

able thing is it, that Christ, with so much labour, having laid out a way for us, so few there are that follow him in this way.

O that we would mark, and marking, keep the happy course of Christ's ascending! for even in ascending many err: the angel would ascend, but of an angel he became a devil; man would ascend in paradise, but from a happy creature he became miserable: both fell by affecting power and knowledge, and many follow this course. Now Christ hath taught us a true manner of ascending, as we have heard; he first descended, and then ascended. These were Christ's ascensions: he ascended unto the mount to pray, to teach¹; he ascended the ass to weep, he ascended the cross to suffer², and after all he ascended heaven to reign in glory. These are the true degrees of ascending: first, we must ascend to prayer; secondly, we must ascend the mount to learn the way to blessedness; thirdly, we must ascend the mount to contemplate of glory, as he did when he went to be transfigured; fourthly, we must ascend upon our carnal appetites to weep for our sins; fifthly, we must ascend unto the cross to be crucified unto the world; and so last of all we shall ascend, in good time by the grace of God, to rejoice with Christ in glory.

¹ Matt. v. 1.

² Luke vi. 12.

8. "To all this (saith St. Bernard) may be annexed this short form of ascending:—First, we must ascend to our heart, that is, to the knowledge of ourselves; then in our heart, that is, to acknowledge our own infirmities; next from our heart, that is, from the love of ourselves; and last of all above our heart, that is, to the love of Christ." What doth our Christian love on earth, when Christ our head is in heaven? "The Lord is my portion," saith David. If we love Christ, why are not our affections with him in heaven? She [Delilah] said unto Samson, "Thou hast said, thou lovest me; if it were so, thy mind would be with me."³ For the apostles, Christ was taken out of their sight, but not out of their hearts; by his corporal presence he departed from them, but for his spiritual presence he continued with them: and therefore as they in heart ascended with him, so he still in spirit remained with them, by this his spiritual presence which was and is ever the same. And here we may observe, how Christ departed from his apostles; first, he leadeth them out of the city; to wit, from the concourse of sin; secondly, he leadeth them to mount Olivet, a place of prayer; thirdly, he blesseth them, or endueth them with his grace at parting; this done, he ascendeth, and this doing, all faithful believers ascend. Thus we

³ Judg. xvi. 15.

see how Christ ascendeth up unto his Father; how, though he left them as concerning his bodily presence, yet with his love, grace, and power, he was ever with them.

9. Concerning the mystery of his ascension, it is very great and excellent: the high and glorious King, clothed with our nature, is entered into his royal palace. By this, we that are flesh and blood have a comfortable and sure trust of our ascending up into heaven, and therefore we find cause of joy in the meditation hereof, for four reasons: first, that we have an advocate now speaking for us at the right hand of God; secondly, that where he is, we shall be, "I will take you unto myself;" thirdly, that as he hath taught us what to do, so also what to hope; fourthly, that he hath left unto us a comfortable promise, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father."

10. And now as we have here many good instructions, so how our hope of ascending is together confirmed we see; that nothing may be more joyfully thought upon than this, while we are here in this mortal body of ours. Ezra and Nehemiah show with how great desire the nations of the Jews were held towards the earthly Jerusalem, after they had been awhile in captivity¹: with what desire should we be led of our heavenly Jerusalem, after our captivity here in this world! As-

¹ Neh. i. 1.

surely there is nothing that we can meditate of with more joy, than of Christ's ascension up into heaven, at the right hand of his Father, where he sitteth as now resting for ever, who once was in labours of the world; at the right hand of majesty, who amongst men lived at the left hand of adversity. In the old law, the high priest once a year entered the holy of holies; "We have an high priest (saith the apostle) that is once entered into the heavens, and there maketh intercession for us."²

CHAPTER XXX.

Of the coming down of the Holy Ghost, and how we should in all Christian manner entertain this divine Spirit.

"It is expedient for you (saith Christ our Saviour unto his apostles), that I depart from you, for if I depart not from you, the Comforter will not come."³ It is expedient that I depart from you, "that I depart." No marvel that the disciples' hearts at these words were full of sorrow, to hear of their Master's departure; but that this might be expedient

² Heb. vii. 25.

³ John xvi. 7.

unto them, they could not but wonder; and therefore Christ by-and-by tells them the manner how this should be, that is to say, his departure from them was, that the Comforter might come; "Unless I depart, the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, will not come." It is expedient that I depart, because every thing hath its time: it was expedient that I should suffer, to make a satisfaction for sin; it was expedient that I should die, that you might be delivered from death; it is expedient that I ascend, that so I may open you the way; it is expedient that I depart from you, that so the Holy Ghost, which is the Comforter, may come. "But what is this (saith St. Bernard)? this is a great mystery, 'Unless I depart, the Comforter shall not come¹.' Was the presence of the Holy Spirit so opposite unto the presence of Christ's humanity (which was not conceived but by the operation of the same Holy Spirit), that now the one will not come, without the departure of the other? What is this, 'Unless I depart?' Let him hear who here doubteth; first, the head is glorified, then the members are graced. The apostles, for his bodily absence, shall have from henceforth the Holy Ghost to supply his presence, 'Behold I am with you unto the end.'"

¹ Ber. in Ascens. Dom.

2. In the creation, "The Spirit moved upon the waters²:" in the redemption, necessary was it that the same Spirit should move upon the sinful waters of our souls. "Thou sendest out thy Spirit (saith the prophet), and they are created, and thou shalt renew the face of them."³ God the Father said, "Let there be light in this greater world:" God the Holy Ghost said, "Let there be the knowledge of God in the mind of man, of man this lesser world." God the Father said, "Let there be a firmament." God the Holy Ghost said, "Let the will of man be confirmed in that which is good." God the Father said, "Let the waters be gathered together in one place." God the Holy Ghost said, "Let many graces be united in one soul." God the Father said, "Let there be lights in heaven." God the Holy Ghost said, "Let there be lights of faith, hope, and charity, fixed in the believing heart." God the Father said, "Let there be flying fowls." God the Holy Ghost said, "Let there be meditations in the mind of man soaring upward." God the Father said, "Let us make man according to our own likeness." God the Holy Ghost hath said the self same, "Let him be according to our image, holy as we are holy;" and thus we see our Saviour's saying verified, "It is expedient."

² Gen. i. 2.³ Ps. civ. 30.

3. If we respect our regeneration, we know what our state by nature is, when the apostle saith, We are "the children of wrath¹;" but now being born again by the Holy Ghost, we are cast in a new mould, and so are become "the children of God." If we respect our sanctification: we were as Naaman the Syrian², until our washing in this Jordan: therefore is the Spirit of God called "The Holy Spirit," either to discern it from other spirits, and so holy; or else from the powerful effect which it works in us; that is when it makes us holy. If we respect our illumination, when we sat in the darkness of our understanding, the Holy Ghost is called an Illuminating, as the enlightening of the mind of man. If we respect the strengthening of our faith against terrors of conscience within, "The Spirit of God doth bear witness (saith the apostle) to our spirit, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."³ If we respect the calamities of the world without; Christ promising to send his apostles the Holy Spirit, said, "The Comforter (or advocate) shall come unto you⁴;" as if the Holy Ghost were the only stay of comfort. If we respect the mortification of the flesh, the same apostle tells us, that we do this by the help of the Holy Spirit. And what need we

¹ Ephes. ii. 3.³ Rom. viii. 16.² 2 Kings v. 14.⁴ John xiv. 26.

more to show, how expedient it was for us, and still is, that we be partakers of the Holy Spirit? Without the vital spirit, what is the mortal body, but an earthly carcass? without this Holy Spirit, what is the soul of man, but a sepulchre of sin? That there doth dwell in us a living spirit, our living actions show the same; that there is in us a divine Spirit, our divine actions approve as much. When heathen men did perceive that there was something in them, which did move them to argue, to discourse, to compare things present with things to come, they did straightway gather that there was somewhat in man, more than a lumpish body, and therefore they inferred that there was a soul; but when the children of God do find something within them that makes them to pray, to repent, to think of the joys of heaven, and desire a life to come, they straightways perceive, that there is a man within the man; to wit, the divine Spirit of God himself; we feel the motion, we know not the manner⁵; it is invisible how the Spirit doth come unto us. God gave the people angels' food from heaven, they called it manna⁶, saying, "Lord, what is this?" So having divine inspirations from above, which we find moving in us good desires, we say, "Lord, what is this?" This is the Holy Ghost. And

⁵ Motum sentimus, modum nescimus.

⁶ Exod. xvi. 15.

therefore for this article of our belief, it may be said, we do not so much hear with our ears, or see with our eyes, but find it true in our very souls, "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

4. That this Holy Ghost is God, in believing in him we acknowledge as much. Peter said unto Ananias, "Why hast thou lied unto the Holy Ghost?"¹ He by-and-added, "Thou hast not lied unto man, but unto God." The Holy Ghost therefore is God. The apostle St. Paul saith to the Corinthians, "Know you not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?" by-and-by willeth them to glorify God in their bodies.² The Holy Ghost therefore is God. Whosoever hath power of cleansing from sin, the same is God; but this power hath the Holy Ghost: the Holy Ghost therefore is God. Were not our souls by original sin as dark earth, dark and without form, until the coming or moving of this divine Spirit? And are we not also hereby washed from actual sin? Yes surely, according to that of the prophet Ezekiel, "I will pour out pure waters."³ Likewise all, to whomsoever we give glory, the same God: but as unto the Father and unto the Son, glory is given; so also is it unto the Holy Ghost. The cherubims cry three times

¹ Acts v. 3, 4.

² 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

³ Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

“Holy, holy, holy⁴,” as speaking unto three, and yet in the words following, “Lord God of hosts,” as applicable unto one, because the whole three are one, in one divine essence, which is the mystery of the Holy Trinity. And here we find that of our Saviour accomplished, “Lo, I am with you even unto the end.”

We marvel, then, when we consider that men shall go to God, but we do not so much marvel at this, that God doth come to men.

5. Jonathan, to show his love to David, left with him the coat that was upon him, and other things, his sword, his bow, as pledges of his love.⁵ Elijah, when he was taken up into heaven, left his cloak with his servant.⁶ Our Jonathan hath left with us a pledge of love, a pledge of our heavenly inheritance that is to come: our Elijah hath left us a cloak. O precious garment! our nuptial ornament. This is that clothing which doth cover our unrighteousness; let us make much of this garment, wherein we come with Jacob for a blessing. When the woman of Samaria heard our Saviour Christ tell of a water which once being drunk of, the party should never thirst again, she said, “Lord, give me of this water.”⁷ So when we do hear of the Spirit which doth

⁴ Isa. vi. 3.

⁶ 2 Kings ii. 14.

⁵ 1 Sam. xviii. 4.

⁷ John iv. 15.

sanctify ourselves, cleanse our sins, comfort our consciences, illuminate our understanding, strengthen our faith, and as a pledge unto us of God's divine love, nay, of glory to come, as the woman said, "Lord, give me of this water," so may we all say, Lord, give us of this Spirit.

6. The manifold effects of this divine Spirit may be gathered by the manner of the appearing of the same Spirit. The Holy Ghost appeared in the show of a cloud at our Saviour's transfiguration¹, of a dove at his baptism², and upon the apostles in the form of fiery tongues. The cloud may signify moisture, or the dew of heaven. In that this divine Spirit appeared in manner of a dove, it showeth the divine virtues of humility and peace: appearing also in form of fiery tongues of fire, because the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost have the seven qualities of fire; it purgeth by the gift of fear, it softeneth by the gift of piety, it adorneth by the gift of knowledge, it maketh solid by the gift of fortitude, it lifteth up by the gift of counsel, it enlighteneth by the gift of understanding, it burneth by the gift of charity. Of tongues; the gifts whereof, as they burn inwardly, so do they speak outwardly; the appearing of the Holy Ghost was visible in the tongues, and sure it

¹ Matt. xvii. 5.

² Matt. iii. 16.

is we must show signs of God's Spirit, for as it doth kindle in [us] charity, so doth it speak charitably.

The Holy Ghost is resembled unto the wind³, and there was a mighty wind at the coming down thereof.⁴ First, to show that the doctrine of the Gospel should now break out into the world; and that as none can keep back the force of the wind, so should none be able to hinder the passage of this doctrine. Secondly, the wind forcibly beareth down whatsoever doth resist it; so did the working of this Spirit. Thirdly, the wind is wont to carry up the ship against the main stream or swiftest tides that run; so doth the Holy Ghost bear us up against the strongest current of natural inclination. Again, the Holy Ghost is resembled unto water, because it cleanseth. David calleth it "a right spirit⁵:" right, because it leadeth us the right way. The apostle calleth it the spirit of adoption⁶, because it maketh us the children of God. Sometimes it is called the teacher of truth⁷, sometimes the Eternal Spirit⁸, all which names do tend to show the divers operations of the Holy Ghost, as in the former appearance of fire, because it expelleth the coldness of our hearts, and both burneth with inward love, as also shineth, as hath been said, by outward

³ John iii. 8.

⁴ Acts ii. 2.

⁵ Ps. li. 10.

⁶ Rom. viii. 15.

⁷ John xiv. 26.

⁸ Heb. ix. 14.

conversation : it teacheth, it directeth, it comforteth, it cleanseth ; in a cloud, in a dove, fire, in tongues, in the wind ; all which move us to pray with the prophet, " Lord, send forth thy Spirit, and we shall be created." The light of faith shall arise in us, our faith shall be confirmed in good, many graces shall be collected in one ; our desires shall move upward ; and last of all, we shall be holy. He is holy.

7. Contrariwise, without this divine Spirit what are we but as the men of Sodom, stricken with blindness, not knowing which way to go. Sorrowful is it to consider the case of Saul who, when the Spirit of God was with him, was a man of courage and valour, able to counter with the enemies of God ; but when once the Spirit of the Lord was departed from him, he was so distressed as is wonderful : he runs to a sorceress, disguiseth himself, knows not in the world what to do, nor which way to take ; there was not a bush in the field, nor a corner in his house, that could hide him from his troubled conscience. Elisha cried, " My Father, my Father," but Saul might have cried when the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, O my joy, my joy is gone. His body died once, but his heart often. The wife of Phineas in her last breath cried, a

¹ Ps. civ. 30.

² 1 Sam. xvi. 14.

the same might Saul have cried also, "O the glory of God is gone."³ When the prince removeth, all the prince's troop and train every one is removing to accompany the person of the prince; so when the Spirit of the Lord removeth, all joy, all faith, all knowledge, all love at once departeth. Wherefore the Church doth well and devoutly pray: "Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from us." It was St. Austin's prayer, "Come, Holy Spirit, the cleanser of the unclean, the comforter of the sorrowful, confirm me, that I may keep thee; keep me, that I may not lose thee."⁴

8. For the gift of the Holy Ghost,—as it is from God, and promised to be given by Christ, and [was] sent unto his apostles upon the feast-day of Pentecost, (which signifieth the number of fifty, for that the fiftieth day after the passover was the feast of first fruits, with the people under the law⁵;) so is it a feast of first fruits also to the people under grace; when that of the prophet was fulfilled in regard of the fruits of the Spirit; for so the apostle calleth the gifts of the Holy Ghost: "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh."⁶

Now as Christ promised his apostles the coming of the Holy Ghost, so did he also

³ 1 Sam. iv. 22.

⁵ Lev. xxiii. 1.

⁴ Aug. Med. i. 7.

⁶ Joel ii. 28.

show them how they should be prepared for the receiving hereof. First, they must wait for it. Secondly, they must wait at Jerusalem. Where do they wait? in an upper room. What do they do? they are assembled with one accord. What else? They are assembled with one accord in prayer: all which do show us the means of preparing ourselves for the participation of the Holy Ghost. First, faith is necessary, for the apostles believed: Secondly, hope is necessary, for they expected the accomplishment of the promise¹: Thirdly, charity is necessary, for they were assembled in love: the text saith, "With one accord:" Fourthly, holiness of conversation is necessary; they were in an upper room. "The spirit of God," saith the wise man, "dwelleth not in a body subject to sin."² The dove delighteth in fair and white mansions. Last of all, devotion is necessary, they were all assembled in prayer.

The seventy elders received of the Spirit of the Lord at the door of the tabernacle, where God was worshipped.³ When the disciples were assembled in prayer, the place where they were assembled moved, and the Holy Ghost came down upon them⁴; and here we see both of the Holy Spirit's coming from

¹ Acts ii. 1.

² Wisd. of Sol. i. 4.

³ Numb. xi. 24.

⁴ Acts iv. 31.

heaven, as also the means of receiving the same Holy Spirit. Gregory saith, "The Holy Ghost is given in earth, that we should love men: and the Holy Ghost is given from heaven, that we should love God."⁵ This love of God is never idle, but busy here beneath. It was Christ's own rule, "If you love me, keep my commandments:" it is a sign we love the great Emperor, when we keep his laws.

Last of all, whereas the receiving of the Holy Ghost is called the earnest of the Spirit⁶, how many comforts are there which do hence consequently ensue!⁷ When a substantial dealer maketh a bargain or covenant, and in part of payment giveth earnest before-hand, the residue behind is as sure at the day as if the party had it already down: God of his infinite love in Christ Jesus hath agreed with believers for the receiving of heavenly treasure, or treasure in heaven; his Holy Spirit is before given in part of payment, a good earnest: and of the rest behind this earnest is sufficient assurance, which we shall receive at that day when the Son of righteousness shall appear, and all his holy angels with him.

⁵ In terra datur Spiritus, ut diligatur proximus: e cœlo datur Spiritus, ut diligatur Deus.

⁶ 2 Cor. i. 22.

⁷ 2 Cor. vi. 6.

CHAPTER XXXI.

How that exhortation of our Saviour Christ, John the twelfth and thirty-five, doth appertain to us Christians: "Walk while ye have light, lest darkness come upon you."

THESE words of our Saviour Christ, spoken in the first place to the people of the Jews, are generally applicable unto all, but most specially unto them on whom the ends of the world are come, and live under grace, "Walk while ye have light, lest darkness come upon you."¹ Wheresoever the people of God were, there was light amidst the foggy mists of Egypt²: wheresoever the faithful in Christ are, there is light amidst the mists of infidelity and paganism of this world.³ Christ was the true light that lighteneth every one that cometh into the world, and he is the light that still lighteneth all that are in the world. His children are called the children of light⁴: his angels are called the angels of light⁵: his doctrine is called the doctrine of light.⁶ "You were darkness," saith the apostle, "but now you are light, and are called to an admirable light."⁷ The time of grace is a time of light,

¹ John xii. 35.

² Exod. x. 23.

³ John i. 9.

⁴ Luke xvi. 8.

⁵ 2 Cor. xi. 14.

⁶ Eph. v. 8.

⁷ Rom. xiii. 12.

our continuance in grace is the light of life, which life hath sometimes the appellation of light, "Because when death cometh," as the wise man saith, "our light is lost⁸," that is, the continuance of life, which is light. And so in regard of the true light, which is Christ Jesus himself, of his doctrine which is a doctrine of light, of his grace which is the benefit of light: of our continuance in the world, which is a little continuance in the light: of these severally one by one, or of all together,—"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you," Walk, and therefore no standing still; Lest darkness come, therefore the light will not be long.

2. "The light," saith St. John, "shined in darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not."⁹ It is no disgrace unto the sun, though bats and owls cannot endure it: the truth of Christ's sacred mysteries is the light to guide our steps, the lanthorn to show our goings: if we refuse to walk by this light, and to walk while we have a time of light, and to walk too while it is our last moment of light, our darkness is great, our error is great. Have we any warrant to the contrary? Should we not fear lest, before we are aware, a time of darkness come upon us? Christ, as we have heard by his many virtues, is the light of

⁸ Eccles. xii. 3.

⁹ John i. 5.

lights; seeing we have therefore a time of light, let us walk in the light, let us walk worthy of the light, that so we may come to that light of lights which shineth for ever and ever in the state of glory. Yet a little while is the light with us. It is said in the Canticles, "I sought him upon my bed¹;" was the spouse there found? That we find not; "I sought him, but I found him not," saith the text. The scripture saith of Cain's offering, it was "After many days²," as if we should say, It was long before Cain came with his sacrifice, it proved unseasonable.

The evil thief upon the cross, his care was for his body, "Save thyself and us:" but his fellow upon the right hand, who made speed in calling upon Christ, saying, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom;" his care was chiefly of his soul. We had need walk before our day of life be turned into the night of death, before our light of grace be turned into darkness of justice. Our continuance stands at a great uncertainty; there is but a little air between us and death; and they that think themselves most secure, are sometimes soonest of all deceived, and at last wish in vain they had been better advised. God met with Pharaoh

¹ Cant. iii. 1.

² Gen. iv. 3.

in the sea³; with Eli sitting in his chair⁴; with Holophernes lying in his bed⁵; with the rich man when he said, "Soul, take thy ease⁶," yea, take thy farewell of ease too. Here we leave one, and there another; and time is the eater out of us and ours. The sun, though it seem to stand still, it is carried about with a violent motion; the shadow in the dial we see gone, but not going. We never stand still, but are every evening-tide of our life, nearer our journey's end by a day. The snail, though she creep never so softly, yet comes she at last to the highest trees, and eateth the green leaves at the very tops thereof. Age will steal upon our youthful and flourishing days; and therefore while we have light to walk, let us walk with God as Abraham did when he lived in his fear. When the people gathered manna, they must gather it in the morning, for when the heat of the day came, it vanished away⁷: if we will gather our heavenly manna, we must gather betimes, before the heat of the day arise, that is, before the day of mercy be turned into a scorching day of judgment. Our state and condition here is as the natural day itself, our youth is as the morning, the noontide is

³ Exod. xiv. 28.

⁴ 1 Sam. iv. 18.

⁵ Judith xiii. 7.

⁶ Luke xii. 19.

⁷ Exod. xvi. 21.

our strength ; when the evening of age comes, then we make ready to take our rest ; so preparing ourselves, we have life in patience, and a good departure in desire.

3. It is said, to the great folly of the Athenians, that they would never consult of peace, until they were driven thereunto by extremity of war : greater is the folly of the sinful men, to be consulting of a state of peace, when they are driven thereunto by necessity ; never calling upon God, but in time of sickness and adversity : nay, that which is more, when the time of calling is past, when the light is departed from them, and that happy opportunity let slip. Walk while ye have light. At that black day they shall find error unrecoverable, danger unavoidable, punishment unsupportable, repentance unprofitable, grief inconsolable ; which will be a sad catastrophe, or sorrowful end after all. O that we would now be as we would wish to be at the day of judgment ! A foolish mariner is he, that while the weather is fair, will lie still, when the wind is now serving his turn to further his passage ; and will never set forward until a dangerous tempest be come : “ Of these,” saith St. Ambrose¹, “ I will not determine how doubtful it is, whether they shall attain the haven ; only this I wish, that

¹ Ambr. de Agenda Pen.

they set forward in time, before it be too late, when they shall not need to have any accusers, for their own consciences shall be articles against them. The prophet saith, "Lord, I will sing unto thee of mercy and judgment," mercy in Christ's first coming, and judgment in his second.

The kingdom of God in the Gospel² is fitly compared to the summer; first, for that the summer is a lightsome time, so is the kingdom of God and the state of glory; secondly, it is a fruitful time, so is the kingdom of heaven; thirdly, summer is a pleasant and joyful time, so is the kingdom of heaven; fourthly, summer is a quiet and peaceable time, so is the kingdom of heaven. Christ putteth forth unto his disciples a parable of the fig tree. Why of the fig tree more than others? saith one; because it putteth forth last of other trees, and showeth that summer is near. Again, the fig tree, if it be good, it is very good: but if it be otherwise, it is in the contrary extreme; if naught, saith the prophet Jeremiah, very naught.³ Such is the state and condition of men in the state of judgment: if they put forth in time, they bring forth sweet fruits of everlasting joy; if their estate be happy, most happy; if unhappy, the most unhappiest of all.

² Matt. xxiv. 32.

³ Jer. xxiv. 3.

4. Some there are that are so delighted with the pleasures of life present, that they forget what a heavenly treasure they carry about with them, in these mortal bodies, and what a great charge is in their custody to look unto while they are here. The householder, saith our Saviour, should watch for the coming of the thief¹: this thief may resemble unto us the day of death, which comes unawares to take the soul; the house is the body, the door is the mouth and ears, the windows are the eyes, the treasure in this house is the soul; let the householder watch, and not suffer his house violently to be broke up, but let him be prepared to yield peaceable possession, both of his house and treasure, when his gentle Lord shall require the same, because he will give him state in a better inheritance in the time to come. Wherefore that spoken unto the people of old may be considered; "Turn unto your hearts," or, "Now your hearts and you consider together what to do;" seek not life in death; stand with God, and he will stand with you; lose not the opportunity of light, for some sensual and perishing delights of the world.

Judas made the worst bargain that ever man did which bought and sold, when, for a little earthly profit, he parted with heavenly;

¹ Matt. xxiv. 43.



and for thirty pieces of silver he sold the Saviour of his soul. He had heard Christ was transfigured², and lest in such a transfiguration he should be taken from him, he would make gain of him while he had him. Let us never follow the trade of so bad a merchant, leaving, for a few temporal commodities, that great and plentiful storehouse of heaven, and the inestimable treasure which God hath prepared for them that love him. In this respect all of us are merchants. O that men would fall to traffic for this pearl! It is not beyond the sea, that any should complain, How shall we attain to it? O thrice happy are they that come unto that light, where "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, where the light of the sun shall be sevenfold³," as the prophet Isaiah speaketh. Wherefore, O Christian man, if thou walk in the light whilst thou hast the benefit of light, "thy sun shall never go down, neither shall thy moon be hid, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy sorrow shall be ended⁴:" sorrow thou mayest for a time, but this sorrow should be heavenly, and heavenly sorrow (saith the apostle) causeth life.⁵ Of old time repentant sinners, as we read in the prophets⁶, should put on sackcloth, and sprinkle them-

² Hier. in Matt. chap. xxvi.

³ Isai. xxx. 26.

⁴ Isai. lx. 20.

⁵ 2 Cor. vii. 10.

⁶ Jonah iii. 5. Luke x. 13.

selves with ashes ; put on sackcloth, to show they have laid off all pomp and glory of the world ; sprinkle themselves with ashes, to signify they were no other (being compared to God's majesty, who was now ready to take revenge upon them) but dust and ashes : and how should dust praise him ? Again, howsoever they had before exalted themselves, yet now they were come to a full consideration of their estate, what they were under the hand of God. " Yet a little while is the light with us ;" only a little while, and therefore the time of light, the time of walking is not long. O blessed are they that make sure work for time to come, that apply their harvest while the sun shineth, that walk while they have light ; that by a good life draw nearer and nearer unto that life which is void of all death, unto which the Lord bring us all in Christ Jesus.

5. The commination, if men walk not while they have the light, is, " Walk, lest darkness come upon you." Want of light is a punishment : when many of the Jews saw the darkness at our Saviour's passion, they were much afraid, they smote their breasts, and were in a manner at their wits' end. If external darkness of the world be so terrible, what is the spiritual or internal darkness of the mind, to be deprived of the light of grace ? Nay, what is the eternal darkness, to be utterly deprived

of all light of glory? Who would not be advertised in this case? Our time is but short, our departure uncertain. What is the end of our redemption, the fruit of our calling, the joy of our souls, but to walk before God in holiness of life? Beasts have eyes of the body to behold things present, but men have eyes of the mind to foresee things to come. In the second of Samuel¹, and second chapter, Abner calleth unto Joab, in the evening, to stay his revenging hand; Joab saith, "Haddest thou called unto me in the morning, the people had departed back, every one from his brother." O let us call for help early, and not defer until the evening, thinking to strike in with God in our last groans, when the most sensual are made sober against their wills. When Moses foretold the Egyptians of a mighty great hail, such as never was in Egypt², those that regarded not the word of the Lord, left their servants and cattle in the field, and so were destroyed; but such as feared the word of the Lord, amongst the servants of Pharaoh, made his servants and his cattle fly into their houses. These were preserved; as for the careless, the tempest destroyed them. Have we not cause to be careful? "Our sins carry us away as the

¹ 2 Sam. ii. 27.² Exod. ix. 19.

wind, O Lord," saith the prophet Isaiah ; "We are the clay, thou art the potter."¹

CHAPTER XXXII.

How that, inferred upon the parable of the ten virgins, (Matt. xxv. 13.) "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man will come," doth expressly appertain to all Christians.

AT this time had Christ our Saviour now a little before spoken in many parables of his coming to judgment, and the manner how ; here he speaketh of the suddenness thereof. When he comes, this shall be like the coming of a bridegroom at midnight ; when none would have thought the bridegroom near, at this time suddenly there was a cry, The bridegroom cometh² ; some are received in ; and on the other side, some are excluded, and for ever shut out : some are found wise, and these are those that prepared oil in their lamps ; others foolish, and these were those who had their lamps, but no oil in them. All have the name of virgins ; all expect the bridegroom's coming ; but all are not provided for his sud-

¹ Isai. lxiv. 8.

² Matt. xxv. 6.

den coming; therefore, lest any be taken unprovided, as the foolish were, Christ gives this admonition unto all: "Watch therefore, for you know not the day nor hour."³ A man which is gone into a strange country, having given authority unto his servants, and willed his porter to watch, those servants must be watching, that at what time soever the master return he might find them so doing. There is nothing more behoveful unto the state of a Christian man than to arise from the security of a sinful life, that spiritual apoplexy, or dead sleepy disease of the soul. We know that while Jonas slept, the ship was in danger of drowning⁴; while Ishbosheth slept, he was surprised suddenly⁵; while the husbandmen slept, the enemy came and sowed tares⁶; while Holofernes slept, his head was taken from him; all which import many dangers; the ship, the soul; the surprising, the calling thereof to give an account; the envious sower, Satan; the head, Christ Jesus; this considered, had we not need watch? While the foolish slept, suddenly there was a cry at midnight; when they would go and buy them oil, the bridegroom was passed, and the gate shut. It was not the title of being called virgins, it was not the repeating of the name

³ Matt. xxv. 13.⁵ 2 Sam. iv. 7.⁴ Jonah i. 5.⁶ Matt. xiii. 25.

Lord, Lord, that now served the turn. To show that the name of holiness will not suffice, nor the rich man's calling Abraham, Father, can make him sooner Abraham's son in obedience and faith. It is the watchful care of the wise virgins, that must one day stand provident men instead. The gate was shut to the foolish: what was this gate? Even the gate of mercy, indulgence; the gate of grace, in respect of acceptance; the gate of glory, in respect of entrance. "Take heed," saith our Saviour, "watch, and pray." David might have slain Saul while he was sleeping¹, but he was pitiful, and would not; wherefore he awakes him, and shows him the danger he was in. The goodness of Almighty God to man, is far above David's pity to Saul: "See the patience and long-suffering of God," saith the apostle, "to lead us unto repentance."² "Behold, I stand at the door and knock;" God knocketh by his grace at the door of our hearts³; by his word, at the door of our ears; by his benefits, at the door of our plenty; by his chastisements, at the door of our sorrowful hearts, to raise and stir us up to vigilancy, from the sleep of sin, wherein he might have taken us, but that his mercy is to spare for a time of grace, wherein we should be prepared for him.

¹ 1 Sam. xxiv. 17.

² Rom. ii. 4.

³ Rev. iii. 20.

2. Watch, for you know not the day nor hour. Besides the particular day of every one's departure from the world, there is a day, even that day of judgment, to be watchful against this day. Our Saviour here principally forewarneth all; the foolish virgins are careless Christians whom it concerneth before others. The day when the Lord cometh shall be as the days of Noah and of Lot; while Noah was building and labouring, the world was rioting, and never more secure: but Noah and his were saved when the rest perished. In Sodom they were eating and drinking⁴, as if our Saviour would have us hear what the sins of the men of Sodom were; that hearing them, we might take heed of committing the like. "It was not their eating and drinking, (saith Bede,) that condemned these men, but the immoderate use of things lawful; neither is it so much mentioned what they did, as whereunto, neglecting the judgments of God, they wholly gave themselves, that is to say, to eating and drinking." Destruction came suddenly upon these, as also upon men of the old world; not for that their destruction was not foretold, but that it was not believed of any: there was not a stroke given in framing the ark which did not admonish the careless world of this de-

⁴ Luke xvii. 27.

struction to come : though Noah were silent in voice, yet he spake in work, according to that in the Gospel, "If you believe not in me, yet believe these works of mine ;" but perverse men, beholding the ark building, continued in their sins, and were suddenly swallowed up by that sudden destruction that came upon them. No marvel though men sin ; to say true, it is no such wonder, seeing they consider so little the end of sinning.

3. "This shall be," saith our Saviour, "at the time when the Son of man cometh," though it be never so often foretold, and the ark be never so long a building ; though many be silent in voice, yet speak by works ; for all that, nothing is thought upon : sometimes a little is spoken of in this world about amendment of life—all is but words. For the coming of the bridegroom, we have, in holy Scripture, to consider these three things : first, the signs going before, as the darkening of the sun¹, the trouble of the creatures, and such others : secondly, the signs that do accompany him, as the conflagration of the world, the sounding of the trumpet, the resurrection of the dead² : thirdly, those that follow ; the going upon the right and left hand³, the separating of the sheep and goats, the joys of

¹ Matt. xxiv. 29.

² 1 Thess. iv. 16.

³ Matt. xxv. 33.

some, and the woful misery of others; the one called with "Come, you blessed;" the other refused with "Go, ye cursed."⁴ "Lord," say the apostles, "where or when shall these things be, or what shall be the signs of the coming of the Son of man?"

4. For the signs precedent, (as so many heralds before the coming of the king of glory,) amongst other, trouble is described to be in those superior bodies, as in the sun, the moon and stars, unwonted signs, and strange sights repugnant unto nature shall be seen. These are called signs, because they signify the sun and moon shall be obscured, the stars shall fall from heaven, their light shall be overcome of a greater light, which is the glorious appearing of Christ, like as the stars appear not at the rising of the sun. Concerning these signs, let them have also their mystical sense. The sun shall be darkened, that is, the love of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, by the mists and cloud of impiety; the moon, or the Church, with her light from the sun, shall lose her light; the stars, or teachers, shall fall from heavenly doctrine, and so forth. Let them have their literal sense, and so let us consider how the heavens frown upon us, and the earth trembles under us. Secondly, there shall be trouble in ele-

⁴ Matt. xxv. 41.

ments, and great sorrow of the nations ; the sea and the floods shall make a noise, and men shall be at their wits' ends. The confused noise of the waters, moving to and fro, "the elements (as St. Peter saith) melting with heat¹," at all which the hearts of men shall be smitten with great terror ; there is no flying, but all amazed ; they shall not know what they shall do, nay, that which is more, "the powers of heaven shall be moved²:" seeing these unusual effects to happen, they shall be moved, even the angels themselves, at the sudden transmutation, and the incomprehensible majesty of Christ : what shall the sprigs of the desert do when the cedars of Lebanon be stricken with fear ? If the pillars themselves shall shake, how may the weaker parts of the building tremble ?

4. When this little world, Man, (for so is he called³;) is now upon the dissolving, he suffereth fantasies, and many troubles,—every part is moved, every sense is altered, the whole body, Lord, how is it troubled ! how much more shall trouble and disturbance appear when this greater world is upon dissolution, and now giving up the Ghost ? For the signs in particular, as first, that the lights of heaven shall fall, the waters shall roar, men's hearts shall fail them for fear, and the

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 10.

² Luke xxi. 26.

³ Μικρόκοσμος.

rest, all which, to show the violence of all, shall be by the force of fire. The first judgment was with water, to cool and quench the heat of incontinency, which then chiefly abounded: the second judgment shall be with fire, against the coldness of love and charity, which (the world waxing old) shall, and doth, more and more appear. All earthly things shall be consumed; for the end ceasing, those things which appertain unto the end, cease. The nations shall mourn, or⁴, “the tribes of the earth⁵,” that is, those that have not their freedom in heaven. The Jews shall mourn, the Gentiles shall mourn. Christians that more loved the world than they loved Christ, shall mourn: the tribes of the earth, not the tribes of the Lord; “for these, they shall go (saith the prophet) to confess unto the name of the Lord.”⁶ The other shall bewail themselves in their faults which they have committed, in their follies which they have not corrected, in their glory which they have lost, and, last of all, in their punishments, which they shall incessantly suffer.

6. For the signs that accompany him, as the sounding of the trump and others, what a noise shall this be, which the joyful creatures above in felicity, and that woful soul beneath in misery, and (between both) the dead body

⁴ [Ed. 1602. “As S. Jeremy saith.”]

⁵ Matt. xxiv. 30.

⁶ Psalm cxxii. 4.

in the grave shall hear ; what a noise will this be that all shall hear at once, in a most wonderful manner ! Then shall follow the resurrection of the dead ; “Awake, thou that sleepest, and come to judgment :” the sepulchres shall open as they opened at Christ’s passion, not many, but all ; not from the Holy City only, but from all cities, and parts, and corners, of the world : all that are in the graves shall hear the voice and come forth. When we hear the thunder, we think there is a God ; when we hear this, we shall see it. Then shall the Son of man appear, and all his holy angels with him ; then shall he come visibly in the clouds¹, to whom the Father hath committed judgment, in that very form to judge, wherein he was judged. “They shall see him whom they have pierced ;” the good shall see him to exultation ; the evil to confusion, and shame of their own folly. Now is he called a Judge, who was before called the Son of man ; now is he called a King. The King shall say, “Go into everlasting torment, prepared for the devil and his angels :” it is said, Ye blessed of my Father, not Ye cursed by my Father ; as if God blesseth, but rejecteth none, did they not reject themselves. “The King shall say,” then Pilate shall not doubt, and ask the question, “Art thou then a king ?”²

¹ Rev. i. 7.

² John xviii. 37.

Then the Jews shall not say, We have no king: Pilate and the Jews shall now see he is a King indeed, "even the King of kings." Then shall he come clothed with light as with a garment; he shall come with great power and majesty; his angels shall gather all together from the four corners of the earth; the whole world shall fight against them who fought against the Author of all things; such as the King is, such shall be the power of his coming. Now for the very time of this coming of the Son of God, let none busy their heads, seeing it is not known to the angels of heaven.

7. For the signs that follow after, which are these: "Then shall the sheep be separated from the goats, the tares from the wheat. Then two shall be grinding in the mill, the one received, the other left alone; two in the field, one received, the other forsaken."³

The very place shall show every one's condition, some unto the right hand, and some unto the left. Then, "Come, ye blessed: when I was hungry, ye fed me; when I was naked, ye clothed me⁴;" counting all done unto the needy as done unto himself. Then shall the righteous say, "Lord, when have we fed thee, and clothed thee?" by a kind of admiration, proceeding from the greatness

³ Luke xvii. 35, 36.

⁴ Matt. xxv. 37, 38.

of the reward, as if we thought not we had done all this unto thee. On the contrary part, the unmerciful shall not wonder after this manner, because they knew Christ did hunger in the poor, and want clothing in the naked; then that shall not be granted which is required, because that was not performed which was commanded. So unto the just this coming of the Judge shall be as summer after winter, but unto the unjust, as the winter after summer. Solomon, to show the estate of these, taketh an instance from a young man, one that thinks himself the farthest off. The wise man tells him judgment will come.¹

8. In all temptations it availeth much to call to mind this day of judgment, and that a remembrance hereof should sink deeply into our hearts: If we would be covetous and desire that which is other men's; if we would be ambitious, and seek the glory of the world, let a remembrance of judgment come into our minds; let us say unto our own souls, O soul, there is a resurrection and a judgment that doth expect thee. He that would not have then his wounds seen, let him now seek to cure them; this is the time when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. "The world passeth (saith St. John), and the con-

¹ Eccles. xi. 9.

cupiscence thereof²:" wherefore, whosoever cleaveth unto these worldly things is in continual passage with the world; the whole perishing, every part perisheth. Attend and take heed to yourselves, saith our Saviour, that your hearts be not overladen and pressed down with gluttony and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, that that day come not upon you unawares³; for as a snare unlooked for, shall it come upon all which sit upon the face of the earth, that is, which delightfully rest upon the love of earthly things. The godly truly pass over the earth as strangers and pilgrims, but the worldly-minded as citizens and inhabitants; to these this day is as a snare, because it takes them unprepared; but unto the other it is a day of expectation, because it finds them ready.

9. If any skilful physician should command us, saying, Take you heed, that any of you eat not greedily of the juice of such and such an herb; if he do, he shall die presently; with what care doth every one keep the commandment, lest, by tasting of the forbidden herb, he perish? but now the Saviour and Lord of our souls and bodies commandeth us to beware of the herbs of surfeiting and cares of this life; and how many of us, notwith-

² 1 John ii. 17.

³ Luke xxi. 35.

standing, do not only not fear to be wounded herewith, but also wholly consumed? will we not believe our heavenly Physician? How more precious is the preservation of the soul, than the life of the body! "Watch and pray, always watch;" not that the sense only is here understood of seeing, but the watchfulness of the understanding; pray always, not as if our prayers should not be interrupted by any necessities of the body, as the Massilians dreamed; but "pray always" is understood, when as no mortal sin cometh between, hindering the effect thereof and good works; and, therefore, it is said, "That ye may be accounted worthy to avoid these things."¹

10. "Watch, for ye know not the day nor hour." "Let no man" (saith St. Austin) "seek curiously when he cometh, but let him make himself ready against the coming of Christ."² Mention is made of the signs precedent unto his coming; the time itself is left uncertain; the uncertainty of the time causeth fear; the ignorance of the signs may lead into error: so we always live, that always we may be watchful. We may know the signs, but ought not to search after the knowledge of the time itself, which is unsearchable: when we see in an old man the

¹ Luke xxi. 36.

² Nemo quærat quando venit, sed vigilet ut paratum inveniat.

signs of age, we gather his time is not long; when he shall die, we know not; so, beholding the world troubled, charity waxing cold, we know these are signs of a decaying age; yet sometimes age continueth; how long, none knoweth; and this is the very reason our Saviour himself useth to stir us up to watchfulness: "Watch, because you know not the day, nor hour, when the Son of man cometh."

If the householder will watch for the saving of his substance, how much more should every one be watchful for the saving of his soul? In the householder three things are observed: first, he endeavoureth to know the deceit of the thief; secondly, to provide for the custody of himself; thirdly, he careth that his house be not broken up: and thus he watcheth not one, but every hour of the night, that at what hour soever he be assaulted, he may be found stirring.

11. Those who look for the coming of the bridegroom, have their lights in their hands, that is, in their works: these lights are burning, that is to say, ardent in charity: these lights are shining, that is to say, giving good example of piety; these watch, that is to say, open the eyes of their faith, when the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ showeth: these watch in the night, that is to say, when the world is given to all iniquity, the works of

darkness. Four things there are which may make men to wake: the first is, the crowing of the cocks, that is, the calling of those to whom God hath said, "Oh, son of man, I have made thee a watchman."¹ The cock beateth with his wings, and wakeneth himself first, and then with his voice wakeneth others. The second thing to make men wake is the rising of the sun—this sun is the light of grace: a shame is it for men to sleep, when as now long ago the sun is risen upon them. "The sun riseth," (saith the prophet,) "and man goeth forth unto his labour²;" "The night is past, and the day is come near; let us walk," saith the apostle, "as in the day." The third thing to make men awake is the fear of the thief; or the coming of judgment, which is as the coming of a thief in the night, if we respect either particular or general judgment. It was said unto the rich man, "This night shall thy soul be taken from thee;" it was said of the bridegroom's coming, "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go out to meet him." The fourth thing to make men awake is the care of their goods; we have a great charge under our hands, and a charge of so great care, that we had need watch early and late. "For the careless," Solomon

¹ Ezek. xxxiii. 7.² Ps. civ. 23.

saith, "sleep on, so shall necessity come upon thee like an armed man."³ Many are so heavy asleep, that no calling will awake them; there shall a trump one day sound in their ears that shall awaken them, (I pray God not affright them,) whether they will or no. "That which I say unto you," saith our Saviour, "I say unto all, Watch." The night of death may steal upon men before they be aware—the day of judgment will come when they think not of it. "Watch, for you know not the day nor hour." "Watch, you know not when the master of the house will return:" whether in the morning of childhood, or in the third hour of youth, or in the sixth hour of strength, or in the evening of age. Watch, for you know not the times. Should they sleep in security, until they sleep their last? God forbid! God forbid!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A loving conference had with Christ and the devout Christian man, touching the state and joys of the life to come, promised to them that learn of Christ, and follow him in this life

Christ. Awake, awake, O Christian soul, and stand up: how long wilt thou sleep in

³ Prov. vi. 10. xxiv. 33.

this dangerous security of a sinful life? Arise, arise, the light of my grace and truth hath shined unto thee, how long wilt thou prefer the love of this transitory world, before the love of me, thy Redeemer and Saviour?

Christian man. O Lord Jesus Christ, thy mercy is great in staying for my conversion, in vouchsafing to call me so forgetful of my Lord, of my love and duty towards thee: now I wretched creature prostrate myself before thee, "Lord, what wilt thou that I do?"

Christ. If thy desire be to know my will (O my beloved) this desire of thine doth marvellously please me; for my delight is in thy salvation: thou knowest for thy sake I came from heaven, for thy sake was I laid in a manger, for thy sake endured I the griefs and troubles of the world, for thy sake suffered I many reproaches of mine enemies: I undertook thy dolours, to give thee my glory: I suffered thy death that thou mightest receive life: I was buried in the earth, that thou mightest be raised up to heaven: now thy sins are more grievous unto me, than much suffering I endured for thee: this is that I require, seeing thou wouldest know my will, Give me thy life for whom I have given my life.

Christian. But, Lord, I perceive thy will, and my own weakness: how should I walk (as I ought) in consecrating my life unto thee?

Christ. If thou wilt dedicate thyself unto me, first love me always, and above all things: next, to know how thou shouldest walk after my will, see thou often meditate of my life once led amongst men; when thou wilt be humble, think how I was humbled: when thou wilt suffer patiently, call to mind with what patience I suffered: when thou wouldest be obedient, think of my obedience: when thou art oppressed with enemies, remember I had enemies too; and call to mind that I prayed for them.

Christian. I see, most merciful Saviour, that thou requirest love above all things, which I yield thee willingly (as I ought), but, Lord, for to bear these crosses of the world, I find it too difficult to human nature, so as almost I know not what to say.

Christ. If thou love me as thou sayest thou dost, thou needest not take scandal at the troubles of the world. Thou knowest I dispose all things sweetly, and great peace there is to them that love me: shouldest thou be impatient at the least things, beholding me suffering great? Wilt thou a worm refuse to endure a word spoken against thee, and see me laden with reproaches? Thou canst for the love of the world suffer tribulation, rise early, late take thy rest: and wilt thou do nothing for my love?

Christian. I beseech thee, O merciful Lord

Jesus, strengthen me with thy grace against all adversities. I willingly yield myself unto thy will.

Christ. Be not afraid to suffer somewhat for my sake, behold I am with thee for whom thou sufferest. "And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me."¹ Consider what I have said, "In my Father's house are many mansions," there have I prepared a place for thee. Call to mind that my dearest friends I ever had in the world, have endured the same sufferings.

Christian. O my Saviour, I am more delighted in hearing, and believing this, than I am able to express. I know not whether I may more rejoice to behold thee dying upon the cross, or reigning amongst the angels; to see thee subject unto all, or exalted above all. O sweet Jesus, how should I praise thee? I remember that of the prophet, "Praise becometh the righteous;" Lord, I am not righteous, shall I not therefore praise thee? Thy poor creatures do the same, and therefore I will not be silent. O my God, draw my mind from all earthly things, that it may only rejoice in thee. Where are ye, all my desires? come and enter the courts of the Lord with joy.

Christ. Thou hast, O Christian man, per-

¹ Rev. xxii. 12.

adventure, some taste of my love, in that thou art so desirous to praise me, in that thou dost as joyfully behold me born of a Virgin, as God from everlasting. In beholding me thy Redeemer suffering for thy sins, thy love is acceptable unto me, and shall find love again in thy greatest labours; but the best is to come, when thou shalt reap the fruit of all; then no adversity shall touch thee, then shalt thou behold my presence in glory, and therefore let happiness move thee to seek happiness.

Christian. O sweet Jesus, when shall I sufficiently love thee? When shall I duly remember thy benefits, thy meekness, thy patience, thy bounty, with all reverence and devotion? If thou be my Redeemer, where is my duty? if my Saviour, where is my affection? O good Jesus, seeing thou hast done all this for me, what shall I do unto thee? Nay, seeing thou hast reserved such joys as I am not able to comprehend, let me not live but to love and know thee.

Christ. It sufficeth that thy will or intention is good, which I respect more than many sacrifices, when thou dost offer me thy obedience upon the altar of thy humble desires, for which desires I have recompence, and thou shalt find as much when thou comest to receive the same, when for a cup of cold water thou shalt receive a whole fountain of

the water of life, when for two mites thou shalt have given thee the whole treasure of the temple ; then shalt thou enjoy immediate fellowship with me in my kingdom, and where I am, there shalt thou also be ; then shalt thou come from the troublesome sea of this life, to the haven of rest ; there shalt thou see me, and enjoy me always, and everywhere. Blessed shall that life be ; for the continuance thereof, it is eternal ; for the certainty, it is without change ; for the place, it is in heaven ; for the companions, they are multitudes of saints and angels ; for the greatness of the felicity, there is an everlasting sabbath.

Christian. I am ravished, O my Saviour, with the very meditation of thy heavenly reward, when I consider that in thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. O happy and happy again are they which are once freed and set at liberty to come to thy kingdom ! O kingdom of all continuance, seeing there is joy found without sadness, health without sickness, abundance without want, light without darkness, life without death, all good without any evil ; all bitterness, all trouble, all punishment, all discord, all fear, is away. O joy, exceeding all joys, when shall I enter into thee ? O my Redeemer, when shall I behold thee, the very end of my desires ?

I now perceive there is a reward for the righteous ; and therefore what blindness doth possess the minds of men, in losing the fruition hereof ? O what folly is it in them to spend their time in vanity ; nay, in the harsh discord found in the love of earthly things, and lose that joyful harmony of heaven, when all the saints in that blessed society shall say, "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and praise." There they enjoy that perfect felicity, where sorrow is never felt, complaint is never heard, loss is never feared : when all labours and travails shall cease ; then shall virtue show herself, where vice shall not be able to look up or appear ; then shall the world which seemed before so glorious, be consumed to nothing, only the just shall then receive a crown of glory. The consideration hereof is able to draw mortal men from all the allurements of a sinful life, and to enflame their hearts in the fire of the love of God ; for who would not find in his heart to honour that God which hath prepared so excellent things for those that serve and honour him ? Who would not turn all his endeavours, all his desires, to walk before him in holiness of life, whose reward is without measure in the life to come ? This is the profit of this consideration, only to move us to return love

unto him who hath first loved us. And now, O most merciful Jesus, I beseech thee by thy sorrows which thou sufferedst, by thy blood which thou sheddedst, yea, by that infinite love which thou bearest towards us, increase in us true love of thee, O Redeemer of the world.

Christ. Consider yet a little farther, O Christian man, thy creation, what excellency and dignity thy Creator bestowed upon thee; weigh with what love and with what worship he is again to be honoured. Surely when creating and ordaining the universality of visible and invisible things he had disposed to make human nature; with high counsel handled he the worthiness of thy creation, as one whom he decreed to honour before all the creatures in the world: behold therefore the highness of thy creation, and recount more and more thy duty of rendering love. "Let us make (saith God) man after our own image." Mark therefore diligently what it is for thee to be created to the image of God: understand that image is one thing, and similitude is another: for example's sake, unreasonable beasts may have a similitude with man, but the image of man none can have but another man. Man eateth and sleepeth, so do the beasts, behold a certain similitude and community between divers natures. Now the image of man none imitateth, but another

man of the same nature. The image then is more worthy than the similitude. By this means shalt thou have a likeness of the image of God, if considering that he is good, thou study to be good : knowing he is just, thou endeavour to be just : beholding his mercy, thou give thy diligence to be merciful : and now hearken how thou mayest be like unto him in his image. God is always mindful of himself, understands himself, loves himself ; thou therefore, for thy measure, shouldst be continually mindful of God, understand God, love God ; endeavouring to do this, which God always doth, and then begin to magnify him, as thou hast well spoken of giving him praise.

Christian. O most merciful Saviour, I know, and truly acknowledge, that it more becometh me a wretched sinner, to cast myself prostrate before the Lord of heaven and earth, weeping and sighing for my sins, rather than to praise him with a polluted mouth : notwithstanding, trusting in his mercy through thy only merits, O my Saviour, I desire to praise him, beseeching him not to despise an impure worm, a dead dog, an unsavoury carcass. If the powers of heaven cannot sufficiently praise him, much less man, which is no other but infirmity itself, and least of all myself, which am worse than others.

Christ. To praise thy Creator, thou art

created, that intending hereunto thou mayest here always go forward, and live blessedly hereafter; for this praise giveth here righteousness, and there blessedness: When thou praisest him, praise him with thy whole heart, praise him by loving; for this is the rule proposed unto the saints of praising. "He praised the Lord with all his heart, and loved God which made him." Praise therefore, and praise worthily, to the uttermost of thy power, thy merciful God. Let no intent, no cogitation be vacant from thee, let no prosperity recall thee, let no adversity withhold thee from praising: let him be the end of thy desire, who is the reward of thy labour, the solace of thy fading life, and the possession of thy true and blessed life: therefore exercise thyself in his praise, to this end servest thou and all that thou hast.

Christian. O Lord of mercies, seeing that he goeth about to catch the shadow, or follow the wind, that thinketh to praise thee worthily as thou deservest, who hast brought me to all this; yet will I not cease to praise my God, and in him, thee, O my Redeemer. Do not the meanest of thy creatures, as the impure frogs croaking in the fennish moors, praise their Creator? For although, as the lark and nightingale, they know not how to sing sweetly; nor, as man, are no way able to comprehend the least spark of knowledge,

yet have they a resemblance of praise. O would to God, that all sweet instruments of music (for in them doth the divine psalmist praise thee), O would to God, all earthly melodies could go upward from my heart, and send unto thee condign praises! But what shall I say? I know myself unworthy to set forth thy praises; wherefore I beseech thee at the least, that other creatures more excellent in place, may supply my imperfection. I wish and desire from my whole heart, that the orbs of the planets, the starry heaven shining with most pure light, nay, that the supernal choir of angels may do as they do, never cease singing that joyful Hallelujah. For myself I could wish that if it were so that my youth ended, my age had equalled the age of Methuselah, yet that every year of that long time, and every month of those years, and every week of those months, and every day of those weeks, and every hour of those days, and every moment of those hours, might have been wholly spent in lauding and praising God the Father, who created me; God the Son, thee, O my Saviour, who hast redeemed me; God the Holy Ghost, who hast vouchsafed to sanctify me. What shall I say? Because I cannot do as I would, yet will I endeavour to do as I may; as long as I live will I praise the Lord: "Yea, as long as I have my being, will I sing praise unto my

God." When the ability of speaking shall fail, and I shall not be able to pronounce thy name, O sweet Jesus, yet at the least the lifting up of my eyes, or the moving of my fingers, shall be a confirmation of my desirous affections to praise thee, O my Redeemer. And I beseech thee, good Lord, remember me, that it may be so: to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all power, and glory, and honour, for ever and for ever. Amen.

LAUS DEO.

Praise to God.

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¹ ["And being forsaken." Ed. 1602.]

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THE END.

N.B. In the edition of 1602, the following note was prefixed to a short list of errata :

“No man knows all his faults, nor keeps all his points. In some of these books there are (fallen in the printing) faults too many, points too imperfect, but none wilful. The friendly reader I know will cover them ; the skilful can correct them ; the simple I would not have mistake any thing by them. And therefore I have set a few of them in this void page, thus to be amended.”

